Diary

1921

[redacted]

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Hogarth House
Richmond.

Jan. 1921.

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1921.

Wednesday
Jan 25th

Here here I waited 25 days before beginning the new year;
& the 25th. not unfortunately my 25th, but my 39th birthday;
& we've had tea, & calculated the costs of printing Tchekhov;
now L: is folding the sheets of this book, & Ralph has gone, &
I having taken this out of the press resolved to steal a few minutes to
baptise it. I must help L: & can't think of a solemn
beginning. I'm at a crisis in Jacob: want to finish in 20,000
words, written straight off in a frenzy. And I must pull myself together
to bring it off. Tomorrow we initiate the Cock Club,
Sayer, Pippa, Molly Hamilton & Sidney dining 'a long sidelegger.
Lytton has asked to dedicate Victoria to me, which pleases me,
& I stipulate, from vanity, for my name in full.
Then, if I had time, I could write a new chapter in
Clive's life. Spring has miraculously renewed barely.
Pink almond blossoms are in bud. Calves bird crow. In short,
he's out of love & in love, & contemplated eloping with a
Spaniard in a motor car. "But after all, I said to myself
as I walked back, I like to think of you back at my armchair.
It's terrible, terrible. I can't give up my old friend
after all" The dusky one lives in Chelsea, has a car, no
husband, children, & is beautiful as the Southern night.
No one has ever seen her, & she, to her credit, has never
heard of Maynard Keynes. We speculate about Mary's
attitude. Poor parroket fallen off her perch, or left to
perish & pine in solitude. Then we're just over the
Great Ga Sydney Smith: such a solemn hearing me; the
poor man's bosom all clouded & tufted owing to Mary,
who sits at Hampstead pronouncing Doctrines, &
caring not at all that D. seriously thinks of leaving
wife & children. "I have no solid core. I am unlike everyone
else, & probably more unhappy." Indeed his bloodhound
blood-shot eyes drooped & almost spilt tears. We

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talked sense into him, & the inflated tempers burst. Ka came down happier to breakfast; & a little less certain of the worth of Murry's goodness. What Murry's goodness amounts to I'm puzzled to say. K.M. (as the papers call her) leaving from triumph to triumph in the reviews; save that Squire doubts her genius — so, I'm afraid, do I. These little points though so cleanly collected, don't amount to much, I think. I read her at the Club last night; then went with L. to the Grand Guignol.

Mon 31st Jan.

Just back from Tidmarsh, from the Club, from Harrisons, from losing two books on a bus. Lytton keeps his books amazingly tidy. We like books on the stage. We slept Friday night with Philips at the farm; wet gloves; but dryness & comfort within. & hot baths, linen sheets (Oh what a housekeeper) in bedrooms. Poor Philips — so I feel him — worn & dragged, but not much life in him. He is kept at it perpetually, now paying men, now sending a cow with ringworm. We walked to pray woodmen after breakfast through the grey green trees, fading away rather mysteriously, stripping the view with their screen. The woodmen had their fire in a ditch & were drinking tea. So round to the farm. The cows here suck the bull, & don't allow his attentions. Philips drove us over, & we sat in the drawing room, lacking life as people lack emptiness worms do. L. much depressed on Friday morning — working out how many hours remained, before breakfast. Indeed, Saturday night was hard going. Lytton labored into gentle indifference, tried, deputed perhaps. Carrington I think grows older, & her doings are of the sort that age. L. loved Murry's story, & we rated him & those brave sneers. Carrington had other versions of this still even acclimatising with other hypnotised rabbits.

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this didn't keep us young & middle age - am just 39½. - being I fear its dependence upon warmth & books & easy chairs. Next day was better, though of course one never has a boy in a strange house & about 11.30 my eyes feel rough & I give up staring at the fire. But it was better, undoubtedly. C. & R. tactfully made out lists of summer flowers in the dining room.

You ought to have dedicated Vic. to C.' I said.

Oh dear no - we're not on those terms at all.

'Ottoline will be enraged.'

Yes, he thought she might be.

The MS. was there, & once I began reading it, I couldn't stop; or rather had to stop myself. Talk of going to Italy at Easter with the party but — One of the 'busts' is the Press. I sometimes think that L & I are settling in too soundly. And now, am I to learn Russian with him & Kot.? If he can read it & place his age with it - I shall be furious. Talk about Keats & Wordsworth & C. & P. Lytton intends to live in Gordon Square permanently & he is penniless; & P. is dam[illegible] perspective - Perhaps after all, said Lytton, one ought not to allow these attachments. Our parents may have been right! & so we discussed our parents, & how Ly S. & Lytton (Lord) & Fitzg. went at it hammer & tongs till 2. A.M - but what about? So many things could never be said, & the remaining ones coloured by the abstinence. But I'm prattling as I write & can't settle to anything. & I detest going away, & can never to do it, but to work, work, work —

Saturday ~~Sunday~~ Feb 5th ~~7th~~ the ~~June~~

Jealousy or ambition has won the day, & I've just had my first Russian lesson & mortgaged my time to the extent of doing three lessons weekly. & it's maddening Russian as I write. Have I done a great deal & to drop in, work in pursuance of my vow? Books begin to drop in,

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& so long as I can do them every other week I rather like the
relief from Jacob. I am beginning the last lap; & it
is a spirit towards the end, difficult to keep up.
We had the Memoir Club on Wednesday. Clive & Maynard
read; both elaborate & polished, Clive mellow & reminiscent
about Mr Karen Hill (he had her 2 years after his marriage,
& for the last time in 1914. She is now imbecile. This
was a surprise to me. She coincided with his attachment
to me then. But she was a voluptuary. She was not 'in love'
Maynard, of course, was the solid piece of the evening,
so long indeed that we had to leave before the end.
I was a little bored by the politics, & a good deal
impressed by the method of character drawing.
Rory Wemyss, illegitimate descendant of William the 4th
Came out very well. — sitting in mock despair at the
Conference where he presided, unable to answer a
question until Maynard had doubled it for him.
Then Melchior; & his [illegible] room, where the three
clerks agreed to leave off playing the piano. 'Smoking
isn't allowed until 5" they said; "This is the
German revolution' was Melchior's comment
I was rather in love with him' said Maynard. I think
he meant it seriously, though we laughed. Then
L.G. at the table, overwhelmed by his own eloquence —
denouncing Kloby & 'goold' making a gesture as of
miser sweeping up money bags. All this was
very brilliantly told. Many were there; & I note that
one likes her better partly for showing light; partly, indeed,
for not being the mistress any longer. I am in hot water
for having told Sydney, which I did debe deliberately,
without malice, as conversation. Thinking it allowed.
Oh what a fuss Sydney is! What does he do but
march up & congratulate Clive in front of everyone!

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Wed. 16th Feb

Russia is matching all the time spared for this book. I can only keep up work & by running to as hard as I can. Every one prophecies an early end. But I feel myself attached to an express train. With hot & heavy baggage me, I must be pulled through somehow. If it continued at this rate - Russian from 12.15 to 12.45 - from 5.30 to 6. from 9.30 to 10, & on the way to Waterloo & back again must have some result. So far the chief one is as I say that I don't write here. Let me think how many occasions I have let slip. We have dined twice at the Cock, repairing afterwards to Hunter's - and Hunter has married the dullest man in England - to Niemeyer's room; the gas fire is broken. We balance on hard chairs. But the atmosphere is easy & pleasant; the dinner modest, solid, & somehow in keeping with our clothes. More & more do I become in a state of undress. I believe this affects my writing - or it's the other way about. Pale, marmoreal Eliot was there last week, like a chastened office boy on a high stool, with a cold in his head, until he warms a little, which he did. We walked back along the Strand. "The critics say I am learned & cold" he said. "The truth is I am neither." As he said this, I think coldness at least must be a sore point with him.

Then there was Murray's farewell dinner at 46. Clark guilty & bawling. Lytton observant & mute. The rest much as usual. I sat next Murray, & let my prejudices run away with me for the first half. He bored, I thought; looked anguished & martyred. Yet the dinner was at his request. I kept thinking how he seemed up us & held us worthless. Then, at the end, I asked after Katherine. Poor man!

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he poured himself out. We sat on after the others had gone.

"But I lacked imagination. he said. I never saw. I ought to have understood. I've always held me ~~loved~~ was free to do as he likes. But he was ill, & that made all the difference. And it was nothing - nothing at all."

This referred to some, without names, to the Bibesco scandal, with which London, so they say, rings.

"And I adore Katherine - She's absolutely the most fascinating person in the world - I'm wholly in love with her."

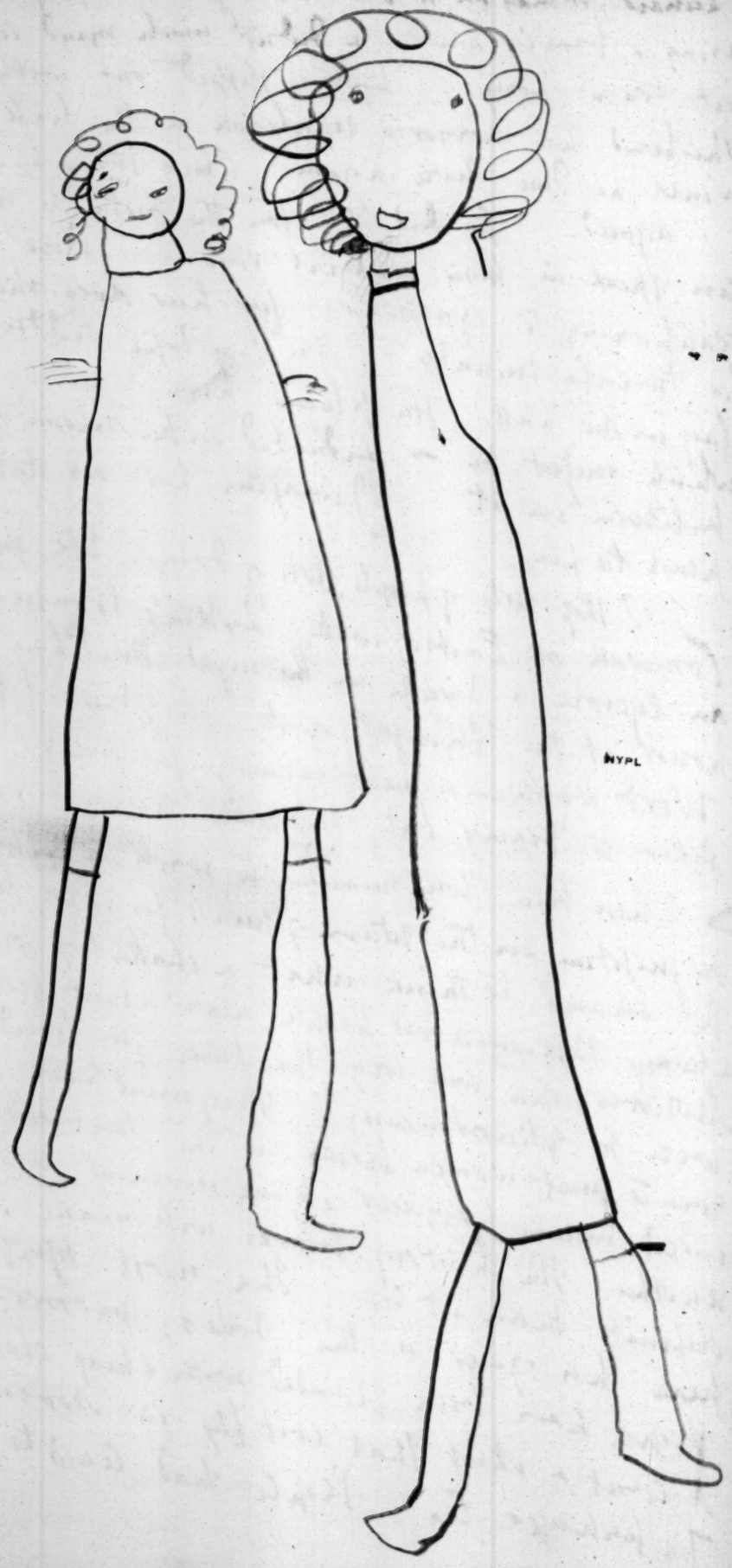
Apparently she is worse - dying? God knows. His affairs seems to have brought on a crisis. She is desperately depressed, I think, her book bad, can't write; & Murry himself, I imagine, is beside himself with jealousy. Murry asked me to write to her. She feels herself out of things, left alone, forgotten. As he spoke with great feeling, & seemed to be very miserable, I anxious to apologise (was it for this that he wished to see us all - to prove that there was nothing in it?) I was filled him, felt with him: I think there can be no doubt that his love for Katherine anyhow is ~~not~~ sincere. All the rest seems good great importance beside it. Sydney's version is of course absurdly over emphatic. We went upstairs & told stories about Ottoline, Desmond was the chief performer. He gets his edges too blurred for my taste It's refuses to think. - seems to trust to natural niceness to steer him or through personal affairs - or so I feel; & has felt nothing very sharp or terrifying. At any rate, when Lytton - Roger came to facts they painted a far more splendid figure. Nothing vivid

to Leonard, it may be, or to natural good taste, I send 46 a little
blazing & brazen always, & did not much mind catching the
last train home. Lytton stepped out with us &
whispered his horror & repulsion in the hall. Never
would he dine there again. Clive [illegible] apparently.
L. agreed. So did I. For the truth is no one
can speak in their natural voice. Clive was
telephoning to Gwendolen (or how does she call herself?)
for twenty minutes. An envelope addressed to her
lay in the hall. He plumes himself on the affair,
which might be conducted on the moon for all I
believe on it. I imagine her as stupid as a
pearl tie pin.

I skip lots of people, lots of doings. We now think of
Cornwall at Easter, with Lytton's troupe. My book is
an eyesore, & I wake in the night twitching with
horror at the thought of it. Now to Dorothy
Wordsworth — a great treat for me. We have
taken to dining out, for some reason.

Friday
Feb. 16th

I have been long meaning to write a historical
dissertation on the status of peers; for old Virginia will
be ashamed to think what a chatterbox she was,
always talking about people, never about politics.
Moreover, she will say, the times [illegible] through
were so extraordinary. They must have appeared so,
even to quiet women living in the suburbs. But
indeed nothing happens at one moment rather than
another. The history books will make it much more
definite than it is. The most significant thing of
1924 this year is the Tales; just over; The
Times have been flooded with cheap clothes.
A coat & skirt that cost £4 in November went for
£1 perhaps 5. People had cleared to buy, & the shops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had to declare of things somehow. Marjory Strachey who has been teaching at Debenhams tweebells bankruptcy for most of the shopkeepers this very month. Still they go on selling cheaply. Pre-war prices, so they say. And I have found a street market in Wig where I buy stockings at 1/- a pair: silk ones (flawed slightly) at 1/10. A hundred yards down the road they ask 5/6 to 10/6 for the same things, or so they seem. Food has fallen a penny here, a penny there, but our books nearly show a change. Milk is high. 1½d a pint. Butter fallen to 3/- but this is Danish butter. Eggs - I don't know what eggs are. Servant girls aged 20 get £45 wages. And the Times pays me £3 guineas instead of £2.2 for a column. But I think you'll find it all there written more accurately in other books, my dear Virginia: for instance in Mr Josiah's diary, Mrs Webb's. I think it true to say that during the past 2 months we have perceptibly moved towards cheapness - yet perceptibly. This yet perceptible too that there are many few wounded soldiers abroad in blue, though stiff leg, single legs, sticks and with rubber. Empty sleeves are common enough. Also at Waterloo I sometimes see dreadful looking spiders propelling themselves along the platform - men all body - legs trimmed off close to the body. There are few soldiers about.

To change the subject, Rose Macaulay dined here last week - something like a lean sheep dog in appearance - harsum scarum - humble - two masks of professional, yet just on the intellectual side of the border. Might be religious though: mystical perhaps. Not at all domineering or impressive: I daresay she

observes more than one thanks for. Clear pale mystical Eyes.
A kind of faded moon of beauty: dress badly dressed.
Dont suppose we shall ever meet — for the love with
Royal Smith, & somehow wait come to grips with us
— To fill in an awkward space between Russian —
Dinner I take up this book. I ought to notice the
long drawn Spring afternoon — tea early by daylight —
Ralph able to get up & lives afterwards. Leonard
book will be printed by the end of the week perhaps.
Marsham would be grateful if I would review W. Richardson
for him. This amuses & slightly gratifies me — especially
as I refuse. We dined with Roger the other night;
& found Sydney still a grudging reluctant convert —
still remembering his master, not his own man or
Rogers man. After dinner we turned over sketches in
the studio — not the pleasantest occupation for a cold
night. Old Roger has a painters imagination
which attracts me — loves a warm & genuine, in
contrast to the contrive Judicial Sydney, who was
catching us out all the time. Sydney looks
melancholy, is touched with grey. This gives him an
air of distinction. I daresay his face has been one of
horrors. The looking glass always confirming the
deportles. Then we had Quentin & Julian for Sunday,
packed Julian home with a temperature, & Vanessa
to bed. Quentin ran in to see Angelica; came up
saying she was better but very white. I liked to think
of all this set going in the younger generation
Lord Lascar, Matthew for dinner — a successful
Combination. A tyrannous old mother has
again devastated a daughters life. I see how
Easily one says I course the daughter must look after her-
of course she does, & gives up her dream — only of
Geneva — still it was a dream: & must now teach music
in Maida Vale until the
old tyrant dies.

Monday
Feb. 21st

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Tuesday
1st March

I am not interested that this book is in a healthy way. I suppose one of my magical changes of style is antipathetic to the material? — or does my style remain fixed? To my mind it changes always. But no one notices. How can I give it a name merely. The truth is that I have an internal automatic scale of values, which decides what I had better do with my time. It dictates 'This half hour must be spent on Russian' 'This must be given to Wordsworth' or 'now I'd better darn my brown stockings.' How I come by this code of values I don't know. Perhaps it's the legacy of puritan grandfathers. I suspect pleasure slightly. God knows. And the truth is also that writing, even here, needs screwing the brain — not so much as Russian, but then half the time I learn Russian I lark in the fire & think what I shall write to mother. Mrs Flanders is in the orchard. If I were at Rodmell I should stand here & get it all out walking on the flats. I should be in time writing trim. As it is Ralph Carrington & Brett have this moment gone: I'm dissipated; we dine & go out to the Guild. I can't settle as I should to think of Mrs Flanders in the orchard. Brett is jazz, pink, brown, vivacious. Why did I think her a moping figure in the chimney corner? Otis insinuations, I suppose. She told me that she has an inner view of others conquered by the rest gus. Deafness, she says, makes one a judge of truth. You become an expert in faces.

We come back from Rodmell yesterday: & Rodmell was all gold & purple. The are dismal

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element was provided by the human race. We went to tea at the Rectory, & found, alas, a roomful of dressed women, including Mrs Allinson, a Mrs Forster, & Mr. & Mrs Shanks. This surely poet, so we judged him (as his poetry is Squires poetry) proposes to live in the village. We shall meet him. He will work in. Oh dear — no more dreaming & rambling for me — always the sick eye recall to editorials & rejoinders, what sylvia Lynd thinks of Tomlinson. Our garden becomes a suburban garden. Anything would be better than a poet — than one of Squire's poets. I would rather have Gerald Duckworth himself — & he is to be married tomorrow. It is settled that we go to Zennor with the Lytton Company on the 23rd. Before that we go to Manchester. So the summer is on us. Already Ideal time broken up. I must buy some clothes. & I note with pride that I have just received £45 from America for the V.O. Then Violet Dickinson came to tea here — grown half a foot taller, but otherwise unchanged; wisely a little coarse & even dotty; pearls & emeralds round her neck; asking questions, never listening, naked, intuitive, humorous in her Hapdash way, careering about to tea parties, marriages & sick beds & keeping up her connection with lunatics & institutions, like a woman of the 90's. She & the Lay sisters who go about doing good, a talking gossip, almost improved out of existence nowadays I suppose; a survival from the 18th century era of indiscriminate goodness.

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My book is back from the printer, who has added the final corrections
a brown back. There are in manes, & I can't read it, for fear of
headers, printers as well as writers. L's stories are
to day, barring a line or two, done. Now Clive proposes we
should bring out his private poems. Morgan goes to India,
& I think for ever. He will become a mystic, sit by the roadside,
& forget Europe, which I think he half despises. In twenty years
time he may turn up again, grave as an armed book, on
return to the East, having written a little unintelligible
poetry. He has no roots here. And he never made me
melancholy. I like him, & like having him about. But
we shant see him again. He sails on Friday.

Sunday
March
11th

But perhaps I colour my view of Morgan from my
painters box. At any rate, Bob at the Cock the other
night made it all seem very respectable & desirable — a
trip to India just the thing for him — a relief after his ....
well, his mother is trying sometimes — very fond of her, I
daresay; devoted to him & he ... " He in the casual
Bob style, hinting little depths & mysteries with one
corner of his mouth, praising with the other.
We had a talk on Friday — perhaps not quite so good,
though as copious & racy. Marjorie does not
seem. I fancy, like a society, thrown herself into it,
& drenches in Salmon pink, short skirt, white stocking:
like all Stracheys tendoes her premeditated care
by unpremeditated outbursts — hugs her legs
tells you she — well, all there is. Then I was locked
with Bob; had my brain wrung dry by his horny
Carmenteris hand. He starts as well: means to
well: is a man of such seriousness & integrity —

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touched with white on the temples to lend him dignity too —
so that to begin with I both like & admire. Oh yes: I end
with that too; & yet the steam roller has gone over me —
he takes criticism say, or the verse drama, & by the
time its over, everything is tight tied in knots: nothing
illuminated. He has a shrewd way with him; but
why he ever applied himself to an art which wants
invention, richness, abandon, originality I really cant say.
Poor Bobo was a little stupid as he opened it: dumb.
I should have said; brooding mistrustfully over the rococo
of the world. Poor Betty .. poor someone else, left with
a bastard. When she can't, as she says 'find my form'
whether its to be realism, romance, comedy, tragedy.
I was more interested in poor Betty, who has come a
cropper, which as I explained, is what one likes people to do.
She lost £200 on her play the other day (the Wilde, Bottomley
& Fielding: un recorded) got no notices, no praise, can get
no work, has spent all her money, is financed by the
Mayors, but they cant make a great actress of her,
provide her with a chin, or Courtauld her nose.
Flames with the most melodramatic ambition.
Nothing short of a great part, a great audience, a great
success will satisfy her. She refuses to accept whatever
it is she might have. Leaves dreadful notes on the hall
table for Bobo — who in her turn waits telays. Can't
find her form, & is rejected by stage managers.
One sees indeed, without much difficulty why the
topic is an unmarketable one. She is too soft &
emotional. Now for writing or anything I believe
for must be able to sever up into a ball & feel
I tragedy in people's faces. They regulate & dissipate.

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6th March

We parted on an island in Kingsway: she saying to me, looking out from her great dark hat under her wide hat, hair drooping down, a little wild, yet unfeminely soft — even woolly, "I'll see you this evening that I must give up writing" or words to that effect. What she meant, I don't know. Was it a compliment to me? or I should like to think. How pleasant to have ruined someone's life all in one evening. But she is one of those who only drift a little way in desperation: she is anchored in niceness & general muddle. Or I daresay it is Betty, to whom I've just written.

Nina approves of Monday & Tuesday — mercifully: or they somewhat seems it in my eyes. But I now wonder a little what the reviewers will make of it — this time next month. Let me try to prophesy. Well, the Times will be kindly, a little cautious. Mrs Woolf, they will say, must beware of virtuosity. She must be aware of obscurity ... her great natural gifts are ... She is at her best in the simple lyric, even Kew Gardens. An ambitious novel is hardly a success. And so forth. A comedy. Though spirited, this two one sided. Still Mrs Woolf can always be read with pleasure. Then, in the Westminster, Pale Shade, other more evening papers I shall be treated very shortly, with sarcasm. The general line will be that I am becoming too much in love with the sound of my own voice: not much in what I write: indecency affected; a disagreeable woman. The truth is, I expect, that I shan't get very much attention anywhere. Yet, I believe rather well known. Nor L. may have considerable success.

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Thursday 10th March

Mr. Chancellor has been here trying to make us discontented with our £ offer of £ for Sheffield – not that there an offer: we have stated terms; will take £1400. New Chancellors say at auction we might get £17 or £1800. But that is doubtful; & an amusing example of the tug of war between business men, the shady shifts they resort to to thwart each others game.

For news, what is there? I lunched with Mesa – Duncan the other day, & dashed my pleasure by losing my Roman brooch. Duncan has a large proper Studio with a Gallery, a Reverted place, very silent, off Haverstock Hill, where a murder might take place, & a dead body be found. On the contrary, they were very cheerful, having been to Cambridge, seen the Greek play, heard Roger Lecture, & ravished their eyes on several beauties – for there are beauties now, not seekers after truth, as in my day.

Norton has descended. Bob, you are meddled it all up Norton can lunch at any rate at 46; & proposes to live three; yet is desperate; verging on suicidal; can talk of nothing but himself; & with, News thinks, hang about them all like an old decomposing albatross.

There's a new psychiatrist Dr. who can make your hair curl, & unravel every knot in your nerves as far as 20 years back – but Norton can't be made to face him. So Craig goes on rubbing in the sufferers that Norton can't work; & he can't work; & now proposes to get employment with the Webbs.

What other news? Singularly little in the way of letters this week, not that I ever write them.

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Sunday
March
13th

Well our Rooms for Sheffield have been accepted of course, & [illegible] we feel, or I feel, slightly defrauded — great nonsense, as we are sure of your money this way, save in the auction, & at most could only have made another £150, I suppose. Still it was the Gambler's chance that I liked. People called Turner have bought it, old & deaf, which appears to be necessary should you live at Sheffield.

We dined with the Sangers ЗАНУЕВОВ on Friday. No one there, or came in afterwards, but Molly; — all our grey heads over the fire made me feel a little Greyheaded. We discussed death, a too subject with Vera, I suspect; our other morbidities. We can't face it. But then death, as I made out for myself at the age of 12, coming at the end gallops is altogether different from death as one sits over the fire. Charlie a little silent as they went forward, as at the display of his wife's complexes husbands mostly are. Molly was very deaf, resigned, but intermittently deaf only. Charlie not very encouraging about Russian — at least he says the literature is scarcely worth the trouble. Nothing but the great novels, & these adequately translated. But I doubt whether any English public can judge of this. A person with my taste must sit in a library & might unearth treasures. Stephen this is provision for old age. Also we talk of Russia next year — also Language helps us to understand writers atmosphere, like seeing their country. And then Kot will pull us through; & vanity urges. Kot, poor Lonat somehow wounded man let out at by chance that Katherine lost 3 mss. books he

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of Tchehov's letters. He patiently sets to work to work them out again - unless she has some very good & sane reason seems to me wanton cruelty on her part. She is a tidy methodical woman. How could one love 3 books sent one by a man who gets his bread by writing? But she never shared Lot: as he does them.

June is a good deal broken just now by the journey to Manchester next Wednesday. We come back on Friday then to Cornwall on Wednesday. To what am I to write? What am I to read? I have scribbled an article for Harmsworth; to-morrow I shall distemper the kitchen rose pink & leaf green. I can't begin Dorothy Wordsworth, nor Night and Jacob travels to the East. Still, I generally put in my pen & pick out something. In the way of history the Germans have gone back to Germany. People go on buying what changed in Ireland. Were executed mainly on account of Dublin for some wretched boy killed early on Monday morning. The worst of it is the screen between one's lips & things. Jailers is so thick. So easily one forgets it — or I do. For instance why not sit down near the Maids & Thames shops was burnt out the other night? Is it a proof of civilization to suffer at a distance - & then the faculty of seeing that law smaller - the Constitution of Cheko-Slovakia for example - is that an important one? Stupid very little bestowed on me. Eliot does love tonight, alone, since his wife is in a nursing home, not much to our regret. But what about Eliot?

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Will he become "Tom"? What happens with friendships undertaken at the age of 40? Do they flourish & live long? I suppose a good mind endures, & one is drawn to it & sticks to it, owing to having a good mind oneself. Not that I owe admire my writing, damn him.

Nessa has influenza; Nightly; & I'm glad to see how solicitous dear old Duncan is, waiting on her, & taking thought for her, better I think than Clive ever did. That little man postponis his poems tch the autumn, meaning, I daresay, to add one or two in praise of his dusky lady. I am told that poor Noll Hutch. found the ~~her~~ separation intolerable, & has come back to platonic intercourse; strictly platonic. How the pilgrim receives the tug of war, or whether he ~~gets~~ takes pleasure from it I cannot say. Anyhow he dines out nightly, 'not been in', I suppose, since the night Jim dined with us, he boasts; & says with severity 'which, thank God, he doesn't bring for his welfare. Perhaps one doesn't like the father of one's children to develop into pure lust & gluttony & pleasure & vainglory. The hopes, anyhow, that he will return to Charleston this summer & write his book on Civilisation. His views on that subject will be one's agreeable with her present life, I suppose.

~~Of Oh~~ well The lady have taught him a fresh version of the old story I. I fancy when he began this book, 15 years ago; he was a Moorish. Well, I suppose there are Moors in Spain. Now the light fades (though I am just becoming brilliant) & I must tackle the aspects of the Labour party programme – one of his triumphs.

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Friday March 18

Just back from two days at Manchester. Intended merely working this account, & how jarred it would be; what lots of things I had to say: & now the pen brings blankness. Well I was kept awake by Engineer men talking in low steady almost continuous voices in the room above till 1-30: & we were up early, breakfasted & caught a train, & so home, travelling all through the great rocky moors of Derbyshire – bald moors; the strangest looking places. So solitary they might be 18th Century England, the valleys cut by a thread of water falling lonely from heights: great sweeps of country all bumpy & gloomy with bare rocks, against the sky, & then behold a row of east end slum houses, with a strip of pavement & two facing chimneys set down in the midst. The houses are all stone. Bleak, soot stained, different from our cottages; not cottages at all, but streets. Suddenly, in the hollow below, lying in a wide valley lies some as complete town – gasworks, factories, & little streets made to run over stone steps & few lamps I suppose. Now – again no houses but wild moors, a thread spread, & farms set into the earth, uncompromising, fenced, nothing like flowers, tony grass or hedges grow round them.

"Yes I said to Mrs Lennox, Derbyshire is a very fine County." We were standing in a pit at the University, a table beneath a light below us, & a row of chairs, in wh sat Professors Lennox, Findlay, Goldman (a financier) – Wiss. Leonard then got up & made his speech, a very vigorous one. We sat round on hard iron benches, with ink pots, on the holes for them, in front of us. All Manchester streets are the same, & all strong with trams & lines. There follow each other at a few yards distance, making the roads mechanical & unsociable. Few hansom cabs striking all the time. Then there are no tea shops, but great cafés; & no little shops, but all big

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drapers - We lodged (charging 15/ each for bed only) at the Queens Hotel, in a large square; but what a square where the trams meet there?! Then there's Queen Victoria like a large tea cosy. & Wellington, black as a marble with paw extended; nine & thirteen were quite English, or at least London. The people were lower middle class, no sprinkling of upper class.

But my observation of the University type was more profound. Mr. & Mrs. Weiss gave a dinner in the refectory before L's recital speech: & there they all were - professors & wives, elderly people, displaying bookish, the inferior branch of a profession, with the manner of class, but not the extreme confident eccentricity of first rate brains. But how imperfectly I thought myself & ultimately how much the pure metal seemed in them, with the very thinnest coating of decorum. The women were dowdy: shyer, but they too had fought for the right - which is a phrase I distrust but how use any other of people, struggling along quiet decently on so many pounds a year, & sacrificing it, as a matter of course, for their views. P. knew in Cambridge me he had been arrested 3 times for attending Seditious meetings during the war. Mrs Weiss said her husband had resigned because the University refused to elect accept a C.O.: upon which they thought better of it. And yet there is no surface brilliancy: not a scrap of manner. It is a little farmhouse professional society, trying to keep up the standards, which (perhaps wrongly) I suppose must be

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hard work in Manchester or am I merely snobbish in thinking it harder to say clever things or write clever books in Manchester than in Cambridge? I applied the test of father's name twice; but neither Lawrence or Weiss had heard it. The women had their activities not so pronounced as in Cambridge. Telegrambes pehales; common efforts to get up trippers; ~~to~~ enquiries about health; flabby but clothes. Old Mrs. ~~Findlay~~ Herford (I distributed the husbands correctly) & Professor Findlay sat patiently looking at the table cloth with nothing to say, like two old horses who have been working in the fields all day together.

L., in the large room after dinner, was emphatically first rate. I don't mean his clothes; nor yet his speech; but as a question of being the master. Now all the professors know that they're not masters. I think L's remark that he did not wish to be elected rather flabbergasted them; & I fancy they asked themselves afterwards why the Woolfes had taken the trouble to come - "Are you a politician?" "They asked me. "Do you ~~organise~~ do much organising work?" I said I listened. Mrs. Findlay shook her head. "They were there then?" Oh for the sum of spendthrift in Manchester & seeing the Zoo. Lord! what a scatterbrain Jane! what they'd done & them send my books. So we went to the Zoo: & I daresay I could write something interesting about that - a pale stone desert flown over by chartermen & decorators: a few bears, a mandrill, & a fag or two - all in the desolation of depression.

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Monday March 22nd

Here we are on the verge of going to Cornwall. This time to-morrow – it is now 5.20 – we shall be stepping onto the platform at Penzance, sniffing the air, looking for our trap, & then – Good God! – driving off across the moor to Zennor – why am I so incredibly & incurably romantic about Cornwall? One part, I suppose: I see children running in the garden. A spring day. Life so new. People so enchanting. The sound of the sea at night. And now I go back "bringing my sheaves" – well, Leonard, almost 40 years of life, all built on that, persecuted by that: how much so I could never explain. And in reality it is very beautiful. I shall go down to Zennor & look at the sea – old waves that have been breaking precisely so there thousand years. But I see I shall never get this said, & Lottie is chattering.

We had Elsie to dinner on Sunday – went to Love for Love, he & Jim the Pet: L: upstairs with a hatpet from the New Statesman. Elsie & I had to drive in to Hammersmith in a taxi, having missed our train. We passed through dank market gardens. Slipping train is awful' I said. "Yes. But humiliation is the worst thing in life" he replied. "Are you as full of vices as I am?" I demanded. "Full. Riddled with them." "We're not as good as cats" I said. "Yes we are" he replied. "N. we don't write Classics straight off as magnanimous people do." "We're trumpery thing harder" he said. "Anyhow our work is streaked with badness" I said. Compared with Mozart, mine is futile. Negligible. One goes on because of an illusion" He told me that I talked like that without meaning it. Yet I do mean it.

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I think one could probably become very intimate with
Eliot because your damned self conscious inexplicability: but
I plunge more than he does: perhaps I could learn him
to be a frog. He has the advantage over in laughing art.
He laughed at Love for Love: but thinking I must write
about it I was a little on the stretch. We saw George
Moore talking to Edd Marsh, on some steps: a little
obese, dim eyed, weak, inconsiderable. I was
disappointed. There was no raked bill to be seen.
As for Clive he dresses as effectively as any beauty,
& poses like someone at a first night. Many
were there. 'Tom', she said, 'you must come & see
the boat race.' Well, then women's emotions,
what I don't trouble to write art, are amazing;
not very serious in my case. Then we met
Nessa & Duncan, as shabby as old mother, making
off home together. I bought a pair of boots
yesterday for 33/6, which were made for another &
fit me precisely. The truth is my foot is shaped
like a snake. I have muddled away these 3 days,
as far as writing is concerned, & intend to write
nothing in Cornwall: but to read the classics.
Candide: Shakespeare - historical plays: Adolphe:
Keats Letters: Thomas Hardy: & perhaps Stendhal.
I shall find some old biography & 18th rate novel &
read only that. Never mind.
Leonard is an impulsive man. He has sent
Monks House to Mr. Martin. He goes there
to morrow. As she is a complete Zany,
husband, no control over anything, has no
dream. I see no reason why she should ever get

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out of Mark's House. How are we to turn her out? And somehow I see her laying eggs despairingly all over the garden – an amorphous jelly of a woman, German too.

I had tea with Nessa yesterday & heard a pack of troubles. Poor Ann has inherited Karin's disease & the ear must be operated on. They have notice to leave Charleston. And Clive, as the remarks, is not much help at Easter. Adrian came in to tell me that Desmond wanted me, to demand my article instantly. Adrian wears a short red-brown moustache, reminding me in a ghastly way of the hair that grows after death. I so distinguished I always think him, but (to me) so repressive.

As for other news, I think I have never said that Lytton stays at home with Lady Strachey, who has taken to fainting on the floor.

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Wednesday, my
March 28.

This is the last evening, a L. is packing. a I'm not in the mood for writing, but feel superstitiously that I should like to read something actually written in Cornwall. By looking over my left shoulder I see gone yellow against the Atlantic blue, running up, a little ruffled, to the sky, today hazy blue, and we've been lying on the Gurnard head, on beds of samphire among grey rocks with buttons of yellow kick lichen on them. How can I pack out the scene?. You look down into the blue semi-transparent water - the waves all scrambled into white round the rocks - fulls swaying on bits of sea weed - rocks near by now drenched with white waterfalls pouring down crevices. No one near us, but a coast guard sitting outside the house. We took a rabbit path round the cliff. - I find myself a little shakier than I used to be. Still however maintaining without fear to my conscience that this is the loveliest place in the world. It is so lonely. Occasionally a very small field is being ploughed, the men steering the plough round the grey granite rocks.

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But the hills, the cliffs have been seen over as a bad job. There they lie Grandpa Green in their stones or roughness, long limbed, stretching out to sea; & so subtly tinted; grays, all various with gleams in them; setting transparent at dusk; & soft green greens; & then one night they burnt like heather at Tegerthen, the smoke rolling up over the crest & flame shining. This we saw from Ka's. The Eagle's Nest stands up too much & Castle-boardinghouse to be a pleasant object, but Considering the wind, firm roots are needed. Endless varieties & nice elderly men to be seen there, come for climbing.

10 minutes to Eleven a.m.

Friday, April 8th

And I ought to be writing Jacob's room; — I can't, — instead I shall write damn the reason why I can't — this diary being a kindly blank-faced old confidante — Well, you see, I'm a failure as a writer. I'm out of fashion; old: can't do any better; have no head piece; the spring is over-sphere: my book out. (prematurely) a ripped, [illegible] a damp firework. Now the solid grain of fact is that Rupert sent my book out to the Times for review without date of publication in it. Thus a short notice is scrambled through to be in "on Monday at latest," put in an obscure place, rather scrappy, complimentary enough, but quite unintelligent. I mean by that they don't see that I'm after something interesting. So that makes me suspect that I'm not. And then I can't get on with Jacob. Oh & Lytton's book is out & takes up three columns: praise I suppose. I do not trouble to sketch this in order; or how my [illegible] temper sank & sank till for half an hour I was as depressed as I ever am. I mean I thought of never writing any more — gave reviews. To wit this in was had a festival party at 41: to congratulate Lytton; which was all as it should be; but then he never mentioned my book, which I suppose he has read; & for the first time I have not his praise to count on. Now if I'd been saluted by the Lit. Sup. as a mystery — a riddle, I then dint mind; but for Lytton — wouldn't like that — your opinion, but I'm as plain as day, & negligible?

Well, this question of praise & fame must be faced. (I forgot to say that Doran has refused the book in America) How much difference does popularity make? (Nessa pretty clearly, I may add, after a pause in which Lottie has brought in the milk & the sun has ceased to eclipse Italy, that I'm writing a good deal of nonsense.) One wants, as Roger said very truly yesterday, to be kept up to the mark;

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that people should be interested & watch one's work, what depresses me is the thought that I have ceased to interest people – at the very moment when, by the help of the press, I thought I was becoming more myself. One does not want an established reputation, such as I think I was getting, as one of our leading female novelists. I have still, of course, to gather in all the private criticism, which is really the real test. When I have weighed this I shall be able to say whether I am 'interesting' or obsolete. Anyhow, I feel quite alert enough to stop, if I'm obsolete. I shan't become a machine, unless a machine for finding articles. Yet I write, there never somewhere in my head that queer, very pleasant sense, of something which I want to write: my own point of view. I wonder, Nimph, whether this feeling that I write for half a dozen instead of 1500 will pervert this? – make me eccentric, – no, I think not. But, as I said, one must face the despicable vanity which is at the root of all this niggling & haggling. I think the only prescription for me is to have a thousand interests – if one is damaged, to be able instantly to get lost in one's energy flow into Russian, or Greek, or the press, or the garden, or people, or some activity disconnected with my own writing.

But honestly. I need not pull a very long face yet. Roger is staying with us. I think he has the most natural among us – so open, sincere & entirely without meanness; always generous, I think & somehow beauty. His pictures are a tremendous laugh. We went to the Bedford Music Hall last night. I saw Miss Marie Lloyd, a mass of corruption – long front face – a scrupulous way of saying 'desire', & yet a born artist – scarcely able to walk, so wadding, aged, unbelievably. A roar of laughter went up when she

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talked ghter marriage. She is beaten nightly by her husband.
I felt that the audience was much closer to drunk & beating
& prison than any thro. The coal strike is on. If I were
crowded & hurried & distracted I would bring my London Square
Jottings up to date. Juana Gandarilla has been seen — a
lady in the Continental style, lovely, composed, simple, intellectual,
emotional, foreign to France.

Sunday
April 9th

I must note the symptoms of the disease, so as to know it
next time. The first day one's miserable: the second happy.
There was an affable Hawk on me in the New Statesman
which at any rate made me feel important (& it is that
that one wants) & Simpkin & Marshall rang up for a
second fifty copies. So they must be selling. Now I
have to stand all the twitching & tearing of private
criticism which I shant enjoy. More'll be Roger
to-morrow. What a bore it all is! — & then one begins
to wish one had put in other stories — a bit out that
Hawked House what may be sentimental. Aughed
next week there'll be Shekhor. Leonard as well as
me. And in fifteen days one (that is to say the 6
people who matter) praise Leonard, think I'm jealous —
but, mark my word, all this will be forgotten in 6 weeks,
time.

Pernel dined here: they dress badly, as I think I've
said before. I think perhaps she grows a little
pensive: but I'm not good at judging my friends'
moods. Then Roger came in. utterly unwearied —
in spite of standing on a ladder for 5 hours ~~for~~
restoring Mantegnas. He drags people here in
shoals — yesterday, just after Lot had gone, in came
Lw. & Mrs Reece, & tomorrow there'll be Pippa —
always some slave or other attending, as wise in
the middle of the week we get whelmed. I want
quite tense or nonsense, & must devote all this
week to reviewing. — I want to read Victoria & Swift.

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Tuesday
April 12th

I must hurriedly note more symptoms of the disease, so that I can turn back here & trace medicine myself next time. Well: I'd ~~be~~ worn through the acute stage, & come to the philosophic semi-despairing, indifferent, & spent the afternoon taking parcels round the shops, going to Scotland Yard for my purse, when L. met me at tea & dropped into my ear the astonishing news that Lytton thinks the String Quartet 'marvellous'. This came through Ralph, who doesn't exaggerate, to whom Lytton need not lie; & did for a moment flood every nerve with pleasure, so much so that I forgot to buy my coffee & walked over Hungerford Bridge swinging & vibrating. A lovely blue evening too, the very sky colour. And then there was Roger who thinks I'm on the track of real discoveries, & certainly not a fake. And we've broken the record sales, so far. And I'm not nearly as pleased as I was depressed; & yet in a state of security; ~~even~~ fate cannot touch me; the reviewers may snap; the sales decrease. What I had feared was that I was dismissed as respite. Roger again last night, weeping at his wood cut which I loved; the grand ~~take~~ style of a large pertinacious rat. We live in stirring times. Here is Ralph saying that Michael Davis has enlisted to protect the country, against the miners & Melver is offered £1 & 4 yds. by Government for himself & car. What he will accept. Yet no one — so far as I know — really believes that we are in for anything. It will be tided over. Our cellars will be full; our leaders too. Nothing is going to upset us. People in a century will say how terrible it all was. And I walked past Downing St. yesterday & saw a few men in cabs, a few men with despatch boxes, orderly public watching wreaths being laid on the Cenotaph: Lytton took already relying 5 thousand copies, & the weather perfect.

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Wed. April 13th

Now I note the latest symptom - complete absence of jealousy. What I mean is that I shall feel instantly warm & pleased (not only after an hour & a sharp pang) if there's a long & sound & appreciative review of L. in the Lit Sup to-morrow: I think this is perfectly true. Most people, though, would not have to write this down. I suppose I had a qualm or two. No time for more than this interesting & important statement. Rather to our surprise, Roger is away for the night after a fair bust up yesterday - Ray Pippa Jayen all together - & I must read my book. A strike now proclaimed for Friday. & we had just planned to go to Monks.

Friday April 15th

I have been lying recumbent all day reading Carlyle & now Macaulay: just to see if Carlyle wrote better than Lytton, then to see if Macaulay tells better. Carlyle (in reminiscence) is more colloquial & scrappy than I remembered; but he has his moments. more punch in his phrase than in Lytton. I don't count this as my judgment though, since I never half adopt. & I haven't done more than half the job. Lytton rang up this morning to ask for Roger, & I asked him about his book. "It's smothered in laurels" Well, rather depressed: "he said, & so he sounded. "I'm in the middle: & then I shall write to you about it" And I'm waiting to you about yours "he answered. We will be candid" I said. "When shall I see you? Never. presumably." Anyday next week would do, he said, - he is coming to tea: dinner on Wednesday So same habit done him much harm. He's Lord, 20 they say Good copies this week, & another edition in printing I have told just 300. Well. but that doesn't prove my immortality, as I insinuate. The truth is I have no other gift standing, or of Lytton.

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One might to write more often now, since I suppose in 20 years, from the publication of Queen Victoria will be thought an important matter; but these things aren't important to us. They say he's been given a bust of Prince Albert & a photograph of the Queen by the Sketch maker. And Max Beerbohm is doing a caricature of him, — altogether he's a solid celebrity, one of our leading writers, not merely the hero of one book which might not be repeated. Ralph seems willing to go on with our printing: though orders have again sunk low. No renew of Chekhov or L. yet: only shorter mention by Donkey in the Lit. Sup. This is the first free time for reading I've had for an age. — I shall finish it ah on L.V.: a great new go a-fetch her. Since George Roger borrows her to read Augustus Does on us, as of Sunday. This is the foreboding of the General Strike. We have put off going to Rodmell. Marjorie's party is put off. L. has just come in with a paper which say that nothing has been done to patch up the strike. Therefore at 10 tonight, when something happens meanwhile, all trains, trams, buses, omni, shops, electric light works come to an end. The servants have been to the Coops. & brought back a week's groceries. We have a bundle of candles. Our most serious lack is coal, as Nelly forgot to order any. We burn Coke in the drawing room, & cook on gas. Hah, Heaven knows why. I don't believe the Strike will happen.

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Sunday April 17th

And I was perfectly right. The Strike did not happen. About 7 o'clock L. rang up Margaret & heard that the Triple Alliance had split: the railwaymen & transport workers refusing to go on with it & leaving the miners by themselves. Nothing is yet accurately known. Presumably the miners will have to [*] & I shall get my hot bath, & take home made bread again; yet it seems a pity somehow — if they are to be forced back & the mine owners triumphant. I think this is my genuine feeling, though not very profound. This fairly shows that working people are well enough satisfied to prefer going on working: I remember the pleasure of the railwaymen when they started running about platforms & leaning out of carriages again.

* They have to give in yet. May 9th

Yesterday we had our avenue walk — the first for a long while: & L. explained the plan of his new book — a revised version of the Wandering Jew. Very disjointed, it seemed to me; & like a good business man, I foretold it would be a success. It is true that sales & reviews flag, & I much doubt if Mr. & T. will sell 500, or lower expenses. But I want to push on with it nevertheless: & a solid big book like L's is essential. We discussed all this walking down the avenue: looking on at the crumbs of Autumn flowers, & so home to tea, & a Russian lesson with Lot, & now I must write to Lytton & behold Mrs Urban. Always these last paragraphs flow me.

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Monday
April
18th

Just back from lunching with a Cabinet Minister. I mean, Glovne, Herbert Fisher. We think he asked us in order to apologize for — everything. He said he had neither the physical force nor the combativeness to carry things through. He said he hated Parliament. A political life is dull, & wastes all one's time he said; one is always listening to dull speeches. fluttering time away. He leaves home at 10. gets back at 11 P.M. & then has a bundle of papers to go through. The upshot of all was that he couldn't be blamed for his conduct about Ireland. And then he was careful to explain that the public is ridiculously in the dark about everything. Only the cabinet knows the true history & sources of things he said. That is the only place where work. A flood tide of business flows incessantly from all quarters of the world through downing Street; & there are a few miserable men trying desperately to deal with it They have to make tremendous decisions on the with insufficient evidence on the spur of the moment. Then he pulled himself up, & said, solemnly, that he is going to Geneva to initiate peace - disarmament. After that, I understand," he said to Leonard. Stephen I confess it seemed to me, sitting opposite Leonard in that brown ugly room with its autotypes of Dutch pictures & Aunt Mary on a donkey, that Leonard was an authority & Herbert a man, whose brain has been harrowed in to shape of a man, whose brain has been harrowed in to sandy streaks like his hair. Never was there a manner lighter airier specimen I thought; his wiry workmans body; & his head cocked at a queer angle, & his hands gesticulating, & his eyes so blue, but almost vacant, & cheerful colourless mood, vigorously mannered & brushed up in conformity with

some official standard of culture — I daresay Mr Balfour talks something like that. But after mouthing his meaning behold, it flew away like thistledown & it appeared that this Cabinet Minister & representative Great Britain in all whose hands are armies & navies was dry, empty, again — & asking me colloquially whether I remembered Aunt Mary on the donkey, which I did. 'The donkey is too small,' I said 'And the horse has no ears,' he added Watts has come down in the world' I said, feeling extraordinarily young & juicy beside him.

"Yes, he said. I daresay. But I do feel that the man who painted that picture was a great man — not a great painter, perhaps, but a great man." After which he descended on a quest to bric-a-brac about the arts: & framed a Mr Manning: wonderful pictures of houses: landscapes in the 18th century style behind them. That's what I like — the 18th century style - old Crome & Cotman. Well, Manning is that style — wrote funny to the Royal Academy to see — quite a young fellow — fought through the war. "But modern art he didn't care for; — we walked down Victoria Street to the Houses of Commons; & he said he was reading Southey's Letters — first rate reading there's a beautiful description of winter. And who are our promising literateurs? I said Joyce. Never heard of Joyce. So we parted, he in a very amiable, grey, distinguished, in his pea-jacket, going to tackle the Lyceum lot. & Enjoying it very much, he said, writing books at Richmond. And then we ran on to Will Vaughan at the Landr Library, jaunty & hearty, & keeping up a laugh like an old sea-captain's all the time he talked. Indeed, we had nothing to say

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Friday
April
29th

A great deal to say, I suppose: a great many portraits to sketch: Conversations to write down: reflections to work in — had I time: which I have not (& that sentence reminds me that I mean to read Marvell:) But every afternoon for a week I've been up to the Aeolian Hall: taken my seat right at the back: put my bag on the floor & listened to Beethoven quartets. Do I dare say listened? Well, but if one gets a lot of pleasure, really divine pleasure, & knows the tunes, & only occasionally thinks of other things — surely I may say listened. We are just back from the 5th: & I had my hand clasped by Lady Cromer in the street: we had tea with Lytton, Ka Wingfield & Ralph.

I ought to say something of Lytton. I have seen him often these last days than for a whole year perhaps. We have talked about his book & my book. His particular conversation took place in Vevey: quill feathers: mirrors: blue walks & Lytton & I taking our tea & brioche in a corner: We must have sat there over an hour.

"And I woke last night & wondered where to place you" I said.

"Where" St Simon & La Bruyère

Oh God, he groaned.

And Macaulay I added.

Ye, Macaulay" he said "A little better than

Macaulay.

But not his man I insisted. More conversations & courts. And then you've only written short books.

"I'm going to do George the IVth next. he said.

Will that please you, I insisted.

And you are he asked.

"I'm the ablest glittering woman novelist" I said —

So the British weekly says.

"You can influence me" he said.

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And he said he could always recognise my writing though I wrote in many different styles. "which is the result of hard work" I insisted. And then we discussed Lytton: Lytton: a kind of Henry James, I volunteered. Oh dear no — not in the least he said.

He has a power of phrase & sticks to it" I said. And so do you. I wobble." But what is Lytton?

Oh he's there all right; Lytton said. Forster says he's an imp. But he had/it seems many views. He believed in 'virtue' perhaps.

A beautiful word, I said.

But just read how the hordes of barbarians devastated the City. It's marvellous. True, he was queer about the Early Victorians — didn't see anything in them at all. But read him. I'm going to visit October. And I'm going to Florence... I shall be very lonely in the evening.

The French have influenced you more than the English. I suppose I said

Yes. I have their definiteness. I'm formed. I compared you with Carlyle the other day, I said. I read the Reminiscences.

Well there's the chatter you old hostess says grace differ compared with you: only then he has pleasures.

Oh yes. he has them" said Lytton. "But I read him to Morton & James the other day, & they thanked - they would not have it." I'm a little unsure though about 'man'. & Hardy my Jasper is it?

Yes: you may cut two lines I said. But

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it a magnificent subject – George the IV^th – & what fun, setting to work on it.

And your novel?

Oh I put on my hard & rummage on the brain. That wants to wonderful. And do all different.

Yes. I'm 20 people.

But one sees the whole from the outside.

History The want of George IV^th is that no one realizes the facts I want. History must be written all over again. It's all morality –

& battles, I added.

And then we walked through the streets together, for I had to buy coffee.

Tuesday 3rd May. Hamilton Fyfe in the Daily Mail says that Leonard story P. & S. will rank with the great stories of the world. Am I glad an? daily momentarily. But the odd thing is – the idiotic thing – is that I immediately think myself picture – imagine myself peculiarly lacking in the qualities I have. I feel fine drawn, misty, attenuated, inhuman, bloodless, wiggling out fifties that I don't more people. 'Limbo' is my sphere; so they say in the Daily News. Then Romer Wilson has brought out a novel – to which Squire will certainly give the Hawthornden prize, thus robbing Katherine yet – so I have some cause for pleasure. I do write this purposely, to shame it out of it did. A full stop in Jacob, owing partly to depression. But I must pull together, & finish it off. I can't read it as it is.

We had dinner at Jagan to

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dinner on Sunday: & I went to tea with Nina on Saturday: & yesterday we were in London at the New Statesman office: & bought Eliot on Prose: & Romer Wilson, — all of which I note to beat off dowging my Russian, I suppose: for I see I am going to say nothing sensible or witty or profound. And yet I comfort myself with the reflection that there's no knowing what wait interest old Virginia's age of there days.

Well, but I assure you, when Virginia's old, no one will be talking of Romer Wilson. What a book! what a perfect example of the fauxbon: every attitude, scene & word, I should say matched in the old wood shop of the minor poets: never a single thing seen for herself, or dared: & yet by taking all the scenery & supplying the appropriate words she has Square, Lyard & James by the hair: another proof that what people dread is being made to feel anything: a certain kind of rhapsody makes them feel wild & adventurous: & they then make out that this is passion & poetry — so thankful to be let off the

Monday May 9th

Seriously though:

Yesterday I had tea with Lady Cromer — & I observe that she's not Lady Cromer in her own drawing room than she is Lady Cromer in the street. Supported by her pretty Chinese, large airy rooms, family portrait by Watts — Sargent — green stained wood parquet floors, & journey to Brinkin Street for Nasoon you see she is the English Countess again: there rather a bore. I'm come to think — do I travel to Finchley Rd on a Sunday morning my chocolate cake merely to

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2.10
1.5
3.15

Exchange views with Lady Cromer upon the ruins of the Bruce Richmonds, the charm of St John's Wood, the good manners of the French - to hear Mrs Keynes called 'very clever' & Lytton Strachey 'very clever' & merely very good to have come there? I can't get it right though - Time was when I thought this breeding & personality so distinguished & somehow celestial that it carried everything off. Now I'm more exacting: often ask that a little middle class: & then the personal goodness attitude restrains me. Always good to people. Work of genius Lady Cromer seems to me an easy way to waste time agreeably. Barbara at the club today, stunned with the problem of life. Thoroughly in for it, & scarcely able to deal with it, appeared to me more interesting — that it perhaps — that Lady Cromer swimming over the waves. But she's a nice woman: a character: beautiful too: so upright, firm, powered — & then that queer old way of bending her head on one side & talking half absent minded as she talks, looking out of the window; her voice so charmingly accented, her eyes half closed. I got home to find Mrs Brenton of Barnes: & according to his code one asks people kindly after them - health, & comes back to shake hands, very punctilious: & this poor man is sunk cheeked, spotted, ugly: drab: yet d. says interesting. & he showed Judge having had 3 hours of them: An order for 25 views of the East today from L. & M.

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Sunday May 15th

What Sunday - dull, wet & cold: so that on the whole we don't blame the coal strike for keeping us here over the fire instead of Monks House. Moreover, L. has a chill in his inside, & sits rather dismally with his head in his hand over tea, allowed no tea or coffee. So that I should mind all the romance of the day dulled. By this time I think Carrington will have made up her mind one way or t'other. She must have had an odious Sunday. But still she must make up her mind. So I told Ralph on Friday, broaching that topic after all these months of silence. He did it himself, rather, by telling me of his gloom of the night before: his loneliness. "I wished for my mother" he said. Then she overtakes me. - I could tell her nothing." He was very flayed & bitter about C. "She thinks" he said "one of the little fruits of all the world" he said. Then he said she was selfish, unemotional & quite indifferent to his sufferings. So people in love always seem to need the loved, with considerable insight too. He was speaking the truth largely. But I expect he was biased; & also I expect - & indeed I told him - that he is a bit of an ogre & tyrant. He wants more control than I should care to give - control I mean of the body & mind & time & thoughts of his loved. There's his danger & her risk: so I don't much envy her making up her mind this wet Whit Sunday.

I read 4 pages of sneer & condescending praise I gave in the Dial the other day. Oddly enough, I have drawn the sting of it by deciding to print it among my stuff, where it will come in beautifully. The Dial is everything it ever rigorous & advanced: so I must to fail

L. went on telling all last

crushed.

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week. I very slowly dribble. Tchekhov is at a standstill. But we hear that never was there such a season for all commodities, in proof whereof not a picture at the London Group was sold 2 days ago: though many are worth buying. And did I say? — We propose to spend £1000 a year upon tea shops, book shops, galleries in Bond Street. After all, why not? I like rummaging in the great Brandt, as I've said before: there we must muddle age for ever things: for another such queer specimens come out yet. There was Mr Fitzgerald Morris on the heartbreaking the other day — a very bad print from Hounslow.

Monday May 23rd — So Carrington did make up her mind to become Partridge — and that is precisely what she is determined not to do; & signs herself affectionately Carrington for ever. If people ever took advice I should feel a little responsible for making up Ralph's mind. I mean I am not sure that their marriage is not more risky than most. Certainly they are not in love, & he has the obdurate Anglo Indian in him. But still, if she could not face the prospect of a week end breach, or of a journey alone to Italy, she had no alternatives. So they were married on Saturday. The day before Michael Davies was drowned bathing at Oxford. Life does that sort of thing too habitually — I begin to feel bored, like a passenger thrown from side to side of a ship. I don't describe what I feel: something of anger at the unreason of it; & something of — not indifference, no: but as if one knew by this time how things go: first these marriages, at the same moment deaths. Just from not knowing them to such he hurled another young man down, & now at the age of 21 it's all over for both of them. And then in

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this fine weather too. We have been to Rodmell, as usual. Home home depressed – for no reason. Slowly moved. Have other people as many as I have? That I shall never know. And sometimes I suppose that even if I came to the end of my incessant researches into what people are & feel I should know nothing still. I mean I go on thinking in the belief that if one thinks about it enough one comes to some conclusion. That I begin to judge doubtful. I was thinking about this in the Strand today – wondering whether I am after some play or novel, as I go on ferreting away. But I'm too scatterbrained to get it right. I was up in the Strand with 12 copies of Monday or Tuesday; what tells a little; & 2 Gosling, to be sent to Lewes; & my review of Patmore for the Times; & then caught a train home. Put my great lupins & peonies in water, & should now settle with concentration to my book. But which book? I've a notion of reading masterpieces only; for I've read the literature in bulk so long. Now I think's the time to read like an expert. Then I'm wondering how to shape my Reading book: the more I read of other peoples criticisms the more I puzzle: can't decide; nor need I just yet. But how I enjoy the exercise of reading it as literature. And I think I can do this the better for having read through such a lot of views, criticisms, everything.

We had a Dinner to report Desmond's talk the other night. He talked admirably for the purpose, but less admirably intimately than was natural; & yet I hate people to talk admirably, as if they were dining out. There was Roger, & Molly & Jane Mrs Green. That's my I–d condescension: I can't help condescending to very plain poor respectable women, & then they look up as hatters grips & twice as able as I am.

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Thursday
May 26th

My evening being ruined by Granié as usual — I mean by non-Granié — I mean the raid he was coming at 6 & at 6·30 — I may as well wreak my temper, write out my fidgets, in this book. Such is the contribution of my brain that I can settle to nothing if I'm waiting. This doesn't want settling to. Haven't I schooled my diary well? It takes what it can get & is thankful.

I sat in Gordon Square yesterday for an hour & a half talking to Maynard. Sometimes I wish I just damn what people say instead of describing them. The difficulty is that they say so little. Maynard said he liked praise; & always wanted to boast. He said that many men marry in order to have a wife to boast to. But I said, it's odd that one boasts considering that no one is ever taken in by it. It's odd too that you, & all people, should want praise. You & Lytton are pained beyond boasting — which is the supreme Triumph. More you sit & say nothing I love praise, he said. I want it for the things I'm doubtful about. Then we got upon publishing, & the Hogarth press; & novels. Why should they applaud what does he work? he asked. And why shouldn't he. Hilbery be sometimes the daughter of Katharine. Oh it's a dull book, I know, I said; but don't you see you must put it all in before you can leave out. The best thing you ever did, he said, was your Memoir on George — You should pretend to write one real — people & make it all up — I was dashed & crowne. & oh dear what nonsense — for of George is my climax. I'm a mere scribbler) What else did we talk about? It was funny to come official dinner. It's sets £120

Thursday June 2nd

for an article — But this was written a week ago, today being the day of the Derby day, the very height of the season, I suppose: another sheaf a flower.

People turn up regularly though with little planning on our part. Madge on Friday; Kot on Saturday; Roger; Fredegond; Mrs. Reginald Morris. Will these names recover anything in 10 years time of the last week of May 1921? I went I had the same record of 10 years back, when I was a young woman — only then one can't tremble. One takes thought. One felt it too literal.

Madge asked to come; so we had her. She is curiously changed. She has become ordinary. Middle age has thickened her lines, & deepened her colour. In her mind she is grown cheerful & commonplace. I notice now that her forehead is oddly pinched at the top, & she said herself that she was stunted — which explains it. She has never grown up, but lived somewhere under shelter, un chastised, talking a great deal about life, but not facing it. Oh the dismal talk about life — always with reference to herself, which makes the mind ignorant. She sees nothing in itself. So we vacillated between 'life' & Will: 'my life': my odd nature. 'I have no brain', 'I am very psychological'. But then I ought to have broken away, & so on; but as she just observes that she is rich, successful, & happy, these complaints which make the staple of her talk, lack substance; & the Family slides into gossip, & repetition. Indeed you can't keep her to poetry, Kitchen, love, art, & children for more than a minute. Yet she has her gaiety & her vitality which protect one from the worst boredom. But not Leonard nor Roger. They weave art & hand with misery. And then was the woman I adored! I see myself now standing in the nursery at Hyde Park Gate, washing my

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hands, a request to reply "At this moment there is actually 2 under this roof."

Fredegond came all in black (& the dress very handy). Uncle Hervey is dead, she said. And she was off to bury him, but couldn't find a train (the strike, you see, is still on.)

Hervey Fisher was the Jewish grandfather; & the only trait of it is a scheme of stones which are neither better nor worse than that on each as a journey in a Red Magazine.

They said he was dropped by his nurse; & so for 52 years, poor man, he has been plagued with illness; has been mad; has never done anything he liked, I suppose, even his marriage being called off by Aunt Mary.

Sunday 5th June

Poor Hervey Fisher has been buried & it is as if he had never been, I suppose: though if I chose I could imagine some feeling on the part of Adeline. Fredegond told us that he cried & lost his temper with Herbert, walked up to him, & licked his eyelashes!

We went to Mrs Royde Smith's party on Thursday to dislike Naomi. Her face might have been cut out of cardboard by John Blunt-Senior. She fixed me with her eye. I stared her with my eye. She jumped on the rock in a second... She is slightly furred too; dressed à la Ida: swinging ear rings, skirt in balloons; a body that bulges out just perfectly. Here she sat in complete command. Here she had her world round her. It was a queer mixture of the intelligent & the respectable. There were two clergymen. They made jokes, which were well within the bounds of decency. My translation of their attitude would be "See how free & playful & advanced we are — yet we have not sacrificed niceness. We are people of the world. Very open minded. Not mere intellectuals — no. Look how nicely we dress." Lady Rhondda was more plain-dealing I thought; a

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solid bull dog, something after Ray pattern. I detest the mixture of pidan & brute strength. Then Rose chipped in with her criticism all in character at which the Clergyman, Duncan Jones, said "Oh Rose!" & Everyone laughed loud, as if Rose had done the thing they expected. Yes, I disliked it all a good deal — the furniture & the pictures — the marriage of convenionality of the Saturday Westminster. I talked to Robert Lynd — & I didn't much care for him. He is a free journalist — all spent in clever words, slanghed, exhausted, voluble, with the cloudy shifty look in the eyes which comes of catering perpetually for the Daily News. I can fancy him much liked. There is no bite about these people — I tried to be elderly & broad minded. I thought of Bloomsbury but then in Bloomsbury you would come up against something hard — a Maynard, or a Lytton, or even Clive.

Murry has written against me & Ethel & Nation. Yes for Rot. yesterday he couldn't keep his seat for fury. He raged in the voice & language of the public house — He said the rot of they I've heard men say before they kick each other out. Is Murry "a damned swindler"? I suppose we admired Murry's writing, all perched for praise — ran up for lack of it. Would he change his tune? In my theory he's Got it goes against my psychology to think people Hounded. Moreover there is more interesting if Jew can keep the stew on the boil — I think he's a greater man than the rest of us. I don't know — at this moment I incline to think him — damned swindler — only a swindler so plausible that he'll become Professor of English literature in the University of Oxford.

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Wednesday
June
7th

About an hour after working this in came Eliot, a the first or third thing Eliot said was "Murry has been barking at me with me - infact he stayed a very long time, rolling another cigarette, & trying to say something, but he did not say it." So then I burst out, & told him about the Tchekhov article; & this was no news to Eliot, who said "When we first knew each other we seemed to be becoming very friendly; but then we realised that we were fundamentally antagonistic — ~~I~~ We had nothing to say today. There seemed to be nothing to be said.

"What did you say?" I asked.

He talked mostly about himself. He said the Athenaeum had almost done for him. He got nothing from Jonny into Society apart from Education — "I won't do anything till I'm 50 or 60" he said" Eliot rolled his head & his eyes in imitation of Murry at this. "He can't hold his own with other people. That's why he won't take Jonny out. I repeated my phrase "He's parched with vanity."

He will be very successful" said Eliot. "He's been giving 6 lectures on Style at Oxford — as though it were a Duty. They He takes the Crown as soon as he's offered it. But he's not satisfied with that".

"No he wants us & you & Lytton to praise his poetry."

"I've talked to him about his writing: I've never been able to praise it."

Literature is the Devil, I said (meaning for the character)

He agreed.

Leonard said how he'd never met a worse man than Murry. That was the gist of what Eliot said. I think indeed his opinion is black at all points, & he knows him, & his methods better than we do. Strange to know a bad man!

The thing is that he is always trying to be himself against his badness - hence his composure, his poses, & also,

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so Eliot said, these hysterical admonitions for great men who have what he lacks.

"But never for his contemporaries" I said.

"He used to lament the decay of D. H. Lawrence" Eliot said. "He is a damned genius - said L:" & L. has written in this sense on a postcard to Sydney inviting him to play chess & discuss Murry.

Eliot, by the way, saw no truth in Murry's article.

"He is extremely clever" he said.

"But you don't mean that in a good sense," I said.

"Oh no: not at all.

Now I think it's true that Eliot had wished us to open our eyes about Murry. He certainly agreed to all criticisms, — made no fuss that he could screen them & add facts if he chose. I think it probable that one of Murry's devices was to crab us both to Eliot, in his oblique way; & to insinuate that my writing was trivial, & so on.

"No one has any scope" — that was one of his phrases.

It will be interesting to watch his career to the high seat of authority. Tenders, as L. says, he commits a felony. Probably in one word Eliot thinks him dishonest through & through.

And Eliot astounded me by praising Monday — Tuesday! He really delighted me. He picked out the String Quartet, especially the end fit "very good" he said, & meant it, I think. He then written novel he thought not successful: Haunted House "Extremely interesting" "It pleases me to think I could discuss my writing openly with him. And I was ironical; & I wrote without cringing (allow me these words of commendation!) Forgive adjectives he says is prodigious.

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Monday
August
8th

Monks House Rodmell

What a gap! How it would have astounded me to be told when I wrote the last word here, on June 7th, that within a week I should be in bed, & not entirely out of it till the 6th of August — two whole months rubbed out — There, this morning, the first words I have written — to call writing, for 60 days; & those days spent in wearisome headache, jumping pulse, aching back, fretful fidgety lying awake, sleeping draughts, sedatives, Digitalis, going for a little walk, plunging back into bed again — all the horrors of the dark outward & illness are more displayed for my diversion. Let me make a vow that this shall never, never happen again: & then confess that there are some compensations. To be tired & authorized to lie in bed is pleasant: then stubbling 365 days of the year as I do, merely to receive without agitation my right hand in jerking out in a leisurely way. Then the dark underwood has its fascinations as well as its terror: & then sometimes I compare the fundamental security of life in all (there Mrs Dedman interrupts for 15 minutes, storms (perhaps I meant) with its old fearfully random condition — Later, I had my visitors, one every day, so that I saw more people than normally even. Perhaps in future I shall adopt this method more than I have done. Roger, Lytton, Nessa, Duncan, Dorothy Bussy, Pippa, Carrington, James & Alix — all there came, & were as detached portraits — cubist, emphatic, seen thus separately compared with the usual way of seeing them in crowds. Lytton, I notice, is more than ever affectionate. One must be. I think, some is

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famous. One must say to one's old friends "Ah my celebrity is nothing - nothing - compared with this" And that was what he did say too. We were talking about love. He said he had suffered tortures from A. & H. L. had wished to marry them & settle down; had been refused; & now can love no more. "It is madness -" he said. "One cannot treat loves like rational people" this was said of Ralph's vagaries. "That won't happen to us again" Yet this people love that still matters - for look at you, you've got fame enough - I sometimes see my name in the paper - yet that was is nothing" You mean this - he said - indicating the 3 you sitting in the window - Always this is what matters - one's friends".

Monday August 9th

Then, as I say, there was Roger with 20 holes in his teeth to be stopped; not to a I thought his teeth were all of dollars bone, as some of mine are; & now I hear that he has mercurial poisoning from these stoppings in Paris. Morris no doubt we are a weakly set of people: but then they is. Nessa &c. have had a splendid summer of dissipation. I don't envy N: I don't want N: far far away it seems; I want nothing but quiet & an active brain. Indeed I am reading hardy for my famous article - the one I'm always talking about. I ransack public libraries & find them full of sunk treasure. Yet I have a woven of uncertainty moving at the foundations of this pleasant life - Allen, when we asked him to cut a branch in the field, replied that he has sold the field for building purposes to a friend. So what have Jack Squire in a political villa within a hundred yard. At this I see Shanks' paper stand when I at his cottage window when I walk down my garden path; a cultivated voices & a cultivated dog barking wake us on Sunday mornings. The truth is, Rodmell is a colony for Georgian hosts. & though

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I am all for letting live, & not reading their works, it is hard & indeed intolerable that I should have to let them ~~they should~~ live next door to me. We have even empowered an advertisement agent a house near Arundel, & paced out a meadow with a wonderful view, & we imagined a house there. But & say we are too old to build a house.

If one goes into the matter, & considers the good of the majority, Allington's Descent upon Rodmell is probably a benefit. He puts up fair & hedges, mends cottages, ploughs fields, runs a telephone, pets cats in the barn, & I suppose finds work & does kindness when old Stacey would have been stingy & too much ja nutti to imagine a better state of things. Old Stacey also said Hawks himself to death, & had to be buried straight away — which will not happen to Allington. However for my purpose farmer who drinks, & lounges about like Mr Smith, muddy & who looks as if he had been dressed by one of the adverteurs in his own Field.

Wed. Aug. 10 li

What new is one to arrive at the truth? I have changed the Daily News for the Morning Post. The proportions of the world at once become utterly different. The M. P. has the largest letters & the double column devoted to the murder of Mrs Lindsay; Anglo Indians, Anglo Scots, & retired old men & dafterish old ladies write letter after letter to deplore the state of the country; applaud the M. P. the only faithful standard bearer left. They lament the decline of England. which is flourishing as usual in the D. N.; hardy spotted at all in the H. The heros of the day in the Herald. are the unemployed who rioted. The M. P. ignores them altogether. But the D. N. has become a vivacious scrap bag. News is cut up into agreeable scraps, & written in

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~~made~~ words your syllable. I may well ask, what is truth?
And I can't ask it in my natural tone, since my lips are
wet with Edmund Yorke. How often have I said
that I would never read anyone before beginning to write?
The book came at breakfast, - I fell. He is one
of the respectables. If Shelley had come before him
now G. wd. have been distressed; though interested
in young men of good birth. But how low in tone it
all is - pursued he art by the friendly dowager.
That is not quite true, seeing that he has some
sturdiness, some independence + some love of
letters. The peculiar combination of suavity,
gravity, malignity + common sense always,
repels me. Once he sat next me + did not speak
until he had an audience. Lytton, mentioning
him in Lucas so early, says he is very amusing.
Of private news, I have little, yet a thousand small
events seem in progress. The time flies. I work
at my watch, find it eleven. I've wasted 30
minutes gossiping with Mrs Wedman. L has his
back in his arm from clearing the horrid little arch of
ivy. We have brought the Wedmans chickens.
I find the egg with a shell of yew - warm, smooth,
with a feather or so stuck to them. The
Servants, or rather the angelic couple of attached familiars,
return to morrow; & are welcome for the first time.
Allison (for he is rather A Mrs na Allison) is away.
I pray daily for her bankruptcy, or that his wife may bring
Dishonour upon his name.

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Thursday
Aug
11th

A fortnight already gone. It goes too quick—too quick. If only one could rip slowly a whole day's strain every hour! For, to speak the truth, I've thought of making my will for the first time during these past weeks. Sometimes it seems to me that I shall never write out all the books I have in my head, because of the strain. The devilish thing about writing is that calls upon every nerve to hold steady tonight's taut. That is exactly what I cannot do. Now if I were painting or scrubbing floors or making patchwork quilts or mud pies. It wouldn't matter.

The first thing that happened when we came here was that a branch blew down off Allein's tree. It lies with its upper branches flaunting up in the air on a sloping part of the meadow, & the children of the cottages collect every morning & swing from the rope, or are twirled round & round, till dusk. A girl of 12 superintends, & I see her at work swinging the small children hour after hour. Sometimes they cry; sometimes quarrel; but the amusement lasts them. I suppose Julian & Quentin would soon be tired of it. No name would consent to stand there swinging them.

In the evening sometimes there's a game of stool-ball. I caught them at it, as I stood in the road beneath, skirts & plus & red & yellow frocks raised above me, & nothing behind them but the vast Asheham chalk-a sight too beautiful for one pair of eyes. Instinctively I want someone to catch my overflow of pleasure.

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Sat 13th Aug

"Coleridge was as little fitted for action as Lamb, but on a different account. His person was of a good height, but as ungainly & solid as the other's was light & fragile. He had, perhaps, suffered it to look old before its time, for want of exercise. His hair was white at 50; & as he generally dressed in black, & had a very tranquil demeanour, his appearance was venerable. Nevertheless, several years before his death was reverend. Nevertheless, there was something intricately young in the look of his face. It was round & fresh-coloured, with agreeable features, & an open, indolent, good natured mouth. This boy-like expression was very becoming in one who dreamed & speculated as he did when he was really a boy, & who passed his life apart from the rest of the world, with a book, & his flowers. His forehead was prodigious, — a great plain of placid marble; — & his fine eyes, in which all the activity of his mind seemed to concentrate, moved under it with a sprightly ease, as if it was a pastime to them to carry all that thought.

"And it was pastime. Hazlitt said, that Coleridge's genius appeared to him like a spirit, all head & wings, eternally floating about in Etherialities. He gave me a different impression. I fancied him a good natured wizard, very fond of earth, & desirous of stopping with weight enough in his easy chair, but able to capture his etherialities about him in the twinkling of an eye. He could also change them by thousands, & dismiss them as easily when his dinner came. It was a mighty intellect ~~set~~ put upon a sensual body;

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& the reason why he did little more with it than talk & dream was, that he is agreeable to such a body to do little else. I do not mean that I was a respectable ex- ception to these . . . . . " which is all that I can take the trouble to quote from Leigh Hunts memoirs vol 2 page 223, supposing I should want to look this up again somewhere. L. H. was our maternal grandfather. a free man. One could have spoken to him as to Demand. A light man, I daresay, but civilized, much more so that my grandfather in the flesh. These free, vigorous vigorous spirits advance the word, when one lights on them in the strange waste of the past one says Ah genius my sort — a great compliment. Most people who died 100 years ago are as like strangers. One is not late a weary with them. Shelley died with his copy of Lamia in his hand. H. wd. weave it back from us after & so burnt it on the pyre. Byron laughed till they split. Going home from the funeral? H. a nature, a H. Docent mind wrong to st. Then I like his inquisitive human sympathies: history so dark because yet battles & towns; a sea voyage in book so dark because the traveller will describe beauties instead of jumping into the Cabins & saying what the sailors looked like, wore, eat, said; how they behaved.

Lady Carlisle is dead. One likes people much fuller when they Siege of misfortune than when they triumph. battered down by a prodigious such a stock of hope & spirits she set out with, & lost everything (so they say) & died of sleepy sickness, her 5 sons dead before her. & the war crushing her hope for humanity.

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& the reason why he did little more with it than talk & dream was, that it was agreeable to him & he had to do little else. I do not mean that I was a recluse in even the literal sense ....." Which is all that I can take the trouble to quote from Leigh Hunt's memoirs vol 2 page 223, supposing I should want to look this up again somewhere. L. H. was our maternal grandfather. a free man. One could have spoken to him as to a Dernard. A light man, I daresay, but civilised, much more so that my grandfather in the flesh. There are, victor victorious spirits advance the world, when one lights on them in the strange waste of the past one says "Ah you're my sort — a great compliment. Most people who died 100 years ago are as like strangers. One is rather uneasy with them. Shelley died with his copy of Lamia in his hand. H. wd. weave it back from us other, & so burnt it on the pyre. Going home from the funeral? H. & Byron laughed till they split. This is human nature, & it. Deceit mixed wrong & true. Then I like his inspirations human by snips & bits: history so dull because it gets rather a Cook; a sea voyage so dull because the traveller will describe book so dull because it gets rather a Cook; a sea voyage so heartily instead of jumping into the Cabin & saying what the doctors looked like, wore, eat, said; how they behaved.

Lady Carlisle is dead. One likes people much better when they're battered down by a prodigious siege of misfortune than when they triumph. Such a stock of hope & spirit she set out with, & lost everything (so they say) & died of sleepy sickness, her sons dead before her. & the war crushing her hope for humanity.

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Wed
stng
to 17th

To while away the time till L- comes in, from London, Festimon
Office, &c, I may as well scribble. Really I think my scribbling
is coming back. Here I have spent the whole day, off & on,
making up an article — for Sphere perhaps, because he wants a
story, & because Mrs Hawkesford has told Mrs Thomseth that I
am one of the, if not the, cleverest women in England. Ah not
nerve power so much as praise that has lacked, perhaps.
Yesterday I was seized with the flux, as the Bible has it;
Dr. Vallence was fetched, came after dinner, & paid a call.
I wish I could write down his conversation — A mild, heavy
lidded, little elderly man, Magdalen Dr, has always lived
here, getting on a few broad medical truths learnt years
ago, which he attributes conscientiously he can speak
French, as it were, in words of one syllable. As to L & I
knew a good deal more than he did we soon open
general topics — old Worrall. & how he starved himself
purposely to death. "I could have had him sent away,"
said Dr V: meditatively "He had been away once. His
sisters away to this day — quite crazy, I believe —
A bad family — very bad. I sat with him in your study room.
We had to set right into the chimney to get warm. I
tried to interest him in Chess. No. He didn't seem able
to take an interest in anything. But he was too old & too
weak. I couldn't send him away." So he starved
himself to death. Hovering about the garden.
Crossing his knees, & touching his little moustache
meditatively now & then, V. then asked me if I
did anything? (he thought me a chronic invalid, &
poor lady) I said I wrote — "what novels? — light things?"
Yes, novels. "I have another lady novelist among

my patients - Mrs Dudeney. I've had to track her up - to pulpit a Contract. a contract for a new novel - She sends Lewes very nervy. And then we have Marion Crawford ... But Mr. Dudeney is the puzzle king. Give him any puzzle - he'll tell you the answer. He makes up the best & puzzles people those great on their memes - He writes columns in the papers about puzzles.

a Did he help to answer puzzles in the war?" I asked.

Well I don't know about that. But a great many soldiers wrote to him — the puzzle king." Here he crossed his legs the opposite way. Finally he went, ~ invited L. to & ~~the~~ join the Lewes chess club. Which I should very much like to attend myself, there glimpses into different groups always fascinating me intolerably. for I shall never & join the party & Dr Vallens & the puzzle king.

I shall never ... has a kind & true ring, alas. For L. has been to see Allison, & there is no doubt that our fate is the worst trouble. Ted Hunter is going to build his cottage, so far as we can tell, right against the orchard wall. He is going to make a proper road, & so far as I can see, the flats will be untenable. What to do we cannot decide. And this just as we were getting settled in to our liking — & with the added bitterness that we might twice over, have bought the field & the terrace & saved the loveliest & views for ever.

NYPL

19th Aug:

Nothing to record, only an intolerable fit of the fidgets to write away. Here I am chained to my rock: forced to do nothing: drowned to let every worry, spite, mistaken & obnoxious scratch claw & come again. This is to say that I may not walk, & must not work. Whatever book I read bubbles up in my mind as part of an article I want to write. No one in the whole of Surrey is so miserable as I am; or so conscious of an infinite capacity of enjoyment locked in me, could I use it. The sun streams (no: never streams floods rather) down upon all the yellow fields & the leafy low lanes; & what would I give to be coming through Firle woods, dusty & hot, with my nose full home, every muscle taut, & the brain laid up in sweet lavender, to stare & cool, & rape for the morrows task. How I should notice everything. The right phrase for it comes the moment one is sitting like a stone: & then on the dusty road, as I strand my pedals, to my story would begin telling itself: & then the sun would be down. & home, & some bout of poetry after dinner, half read, half lived, as if the flesh were dewfed & through it the flowers burnt red & white. There! I've written out half my mistaken power: during the lawn mower up & down, for a week like I am should have a locked to her cage. She bites! And he spent all yesterday running round London for me. Stet. Jane is Prometheus, & the rock is hard & the sad flies pungent, gratitude affection, none of the nobler feelings have sway. And so this subject is wasted.

Only the thought of people suffering more than I do at all consoles. & that is an aberration of Egotism, I suppose. I wish now make out a time table of I can to be set through these odious days.

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Poor Mlle Lenglen, finding herself beaten by Mrs. Mallory flung down her racquet & burst into tears. Her vanity I suppose is colossal. I daresay the thought that to be Mlle Lenglen was the greatest thing in the world: invincible: like Napoleon. Armstrong, playing the first match, took up his position against the gates, — would not move, let the bowlers approach themselves, the whole game became farcical because there was not time to play it out. But Achilles, in the Greek play, was of the same temper — which we all agree to call heroic. In him. But then everything is forgiven to the Greeks. And I've not read a line of Greek since last year, this time, two; But I shall come back to it only in snobbery: I shall be reading Greek when I'm old; old as the woman at the cottage door, whose hair might be a wig in a play, it is so white, so thick. Seldom penetrated by love for mankind as I am, I sometimes feel sorry for the poor who don't read Shakespeare & indeed have felt some generous democratic humbug at the Old Vic, when they played Othello & all the poor men — women & children had been men for themselves. Such splendour — such poverty. I am counting I own the fidgets, so no matter if I write nonsense. Indeed, as any interference with the normal proportions of things makes one uneasy. I know this room too well — their view too well — I am getting it all out of focus. became I can't walk through it.

Sat. — Sept. 10th

My handwriting is getting detestable. But I have done with fidgets long ago, a sat in the sun at Bishopstone, & at Chalkington, & at Telscombe Cliffs. I recovered, & we took to seeing horses — without the least success. Slept that the rule to — from were successful. Myerly grievance is that one runs off the edge of the lovely into hideousness too soon. Newhaven is spot & rash & pimple & blister; with the incessant motor cars like active lice. Much more important (to me) than anything else, was my recovery of the pen; & there the hidden vision was restored. & I felt reborn. I started an article when the obscure, & should have finished

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it today, according to calculations, had not lyttelton come; & the rest impossible to write, unless the brain is unstirred completely by anything save the usual routine. However I gained by the Exchange. We talked & talked; & always dislodged some new nugget, the deeper we went. Of course, her friendships are new, as mine are, fearfully important to her — all the more, as I daresay I have said, because he has been offend all the then shining substitutes which her fame procures — Ladies & Lords without-Unit. But what did we talk about? Goddly enough I could write more freely after tea: this is the colourless morning hour, the most divine across the flats, & rain come at last on the sudden wind). First we skirmish round with trivialities; next we ascertain how we stand; we recognise that our position is sound; then begin on our writings: then on books — but it all easy enough, & interspaced. She is going to write a play. "I am going to meet my Waterloo" — that is to say he is going to have a shot at the creative. If that fails, he dooms himself to history for ever — perhaps a history of English literature. Writing is an agony, we both agreed. Yet we love it. We attack ourselves to the breath glass by our pens. The exciting Muzin began. Clive rang we pour out brandy & so make romance, which does not exist. Clive came suddenly into view yesterday, in white flannel trousers, & open flannel shirt. He seemed bursting through; a hair neck a series of rings of fat, like the Chez Quelen's body. A dowager would hide this with a dog collar. And the heat had ropped his hair, so that he looked debauched — rubbed by dissipation. He was obviously nervous, & instead of boasting of his triumphs, as he did a few months back, almost deprecated them. .. did Lytton think the great would dull? Was he going to serve it up? Well, perhaps it is too dull — One should live in the Country & work " I'm glad to say that the repentant mood was short; & we bubbled his natural man. the New Republic — America — money — ae ae ae —

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I see that I think giving an account of Lytton's talk – for one thing, I don't like the appearance of writing what will interest Mr Gosse or Mrs Asquith in 50 years' time. Then, it is a good renew the brain. I ought to note, though, for my good, that I must get out of the way of minding what people say of my writing. I am noted for it. It breeds discomfort. For instance, when Lytton was telling me of Max's tastes in literature, he thought it necessary to explain that Max had not read me – which was uncomfortable. My dislike of M.H. is attributed to her low opinion of my writing. So I must force up drowning attention to my writing. One steps into the way of it; a little step is magnified soon. But that was the one awkward moment. In the old days there would have been a thousand.

Monday Sept. 12th

It is true that we are alone again, but I cannot take up my pen, partly, I think, from repentance: I said goodbye to James & Alix at 9 this morning: therefore the whole day is contaminated. Fread has certainly brought out the lines in Alix. Even physically, her bones are more prominent. Her eyes are curiously vague. She has purpose & security, but this may well be marriage. James remains precisely when he was – the only human being, Alix say, fit for the contemplative life, which is the highest. To look on Comprehendingly is, she says, better than to create. But James claims no such Eminence. He is the least ambitious of men – not ambitious even of being a character – low, muted, subtle, modest. I suspect that has points there in the shade – which Alix certainly provides. I can fancy him very considerate – selfish, of course, but not blind-selfish. not at all pronounce masculine, or dominating. The worst yet, as I should feel, is the Greyness, nothing is worth doing: ~~not~~ & his mind is capable enough to make out a case for anything, arrangement I daresay his mentony is partly due to us. I fancy that

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in private he maybe as gay as a small boy: perhaps they have a private language. Perhaps they go for treats. Perhaps he is the gayest & gayest of companions. There he leapt onto my bed, directly I left it, - lay reading Jane's pamphlet. There is Noel, too, in the background. Noel, for James, as for Adrian, the unattainable romance, though he has married Jones or Richards, - is romantic no more. I caught Alix in profile & saw her old, masterly, advanced, always in the same coat & skirt. which indeed seems itself an effort over her natural covering.

Lytton, by the way, talked about J—y: & agreed that the b's are all mawkly pambics & sentimentalists. He is himself, he said. So he & Ba are meant to be un-virile, unpossessive, very nice indeed, but tending to be sentimental. And then there's their taste become so degraded.

I have finished the Wings of the dove; & make this comment. His manipulation become so elaborate towards the end that instead of feeling the artist you merely feel the man who is posing the subject. And then I think he loses the power to feel the crisis. He becomes merely ingenious. Now this, you seem to hear him saying, is the way to do it. Now just when you expect a crisis, the true artist evades it. Yet never do the thing, & will be all the more impressive. Finally, after all this juggling & arranging of silk pocket handkerchiefs, one ceases to have any feeling for the figure behind. Milly thus manipulated, disappears. He overreaches himself. And then one can never read it again. The mental grasp & truth are magnificent. Not a flabby or slack sentence, but much less calculated by this timidity or cautiousness or whatever this. Very highly American, I conjecture, in the determination to be highly bred, & the right of obliviences as to what high breeding is.

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Sept 12. 21. Charleston.

My dear Virginia,

I should be sorry if Jack Squire were to suppose that he had seriously put me out; also, I can't swear to the pleasure "put them right", though I'm sure it was nothing but impertinent; & so I hope you will say nothing about it. You don't guess how much I enjoyed my outing to Monks, or how much I like the society & your husband. You have created an atmosphere different from, perhaps better than, any I know. It seems odd, considering that we all started much alike in many ways; but I suppose, as they get older, people who start at all peculiar get more & more distinct. Anyhow, what I want to say is that the pleasure of seeing you both besides being that is particular. I am half tempted to suggest some sort of reunion either here or in the Downs (weather permitting) for Friday — my birthday — only Mary will be with us and, owing to some absurd misunderstanding, the, I gather, is in your black books. So perhaps we had better wait till the following week.

Yr Clive.

P.S. On the ballot Mary is ignorant & silly.

Wed.
4th Sept

Now there's a chapter in a novel! First I suspect that Jack Squire rejected the article: then I suspect that Clive, with his characteristic, lovable, servaisons — & yet he's a most loy — has turned against Coal box, Jacks, & Lavatory, & works to secure her place in intellectual society; & finally, partly from the same reasons, he is determined to contrive so that Mary is on visiting terms with us. The little man is all a bubble, all a muddle; & I could have foretold the whole thing, which has been brewing, I believe, ever since I refused to be one of the ladies at his tea party; & Leonard's abilities have become known: his star is in the ascendant; & when a star ascends, sure enough Clive will be frantically rushing after. But I say much of this is praiseworthy. Leonard has demurs. He is one of those dogs that cringe, he thinks. Strychnine, to continue my comment on the text, it's plain that Mary & I are to be coupled together. No gentle sliding apart into mists. But why? I'm about it reply that I will see her a little & marvel at the likes: since I have heard many versions.

There was a very great storm 3 nights ago — on Sunday night, to be exact. I had to light my candle for support. Next morning our plum tree was down, & a great tree snapped some feet from the ground in the churchyard. Several graves are under leaf; & a wreath of immortelles has undamaged. The cottagers have been busy snatching up the twigs: the larger branches belonging, perhaps, to the Rector. More rain fell that night than in the 3 previous months, yet & is not satisfied. Our garden is a perfect variegated chintz: asters, plumasters, zinnias, geums, nasturtiums & so on: all bright, cut from coloured paper, stiff, upstanding as flowers should be. I have been planting wallflowers for next June.

under glass

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Thursday Sept 15 — This the loveliest afternoon - still; the mist going up straight in the grassy; the white horse & the strawberry coloured horse feeding close together: the women coming out of their cottages for no reason, & standing leaning; & knitting: the cock hucking in the midst of his hens in the meadow: Starling in the two trees; & the ham fields thorn to the colour of the corduroy: Leonard storing apples & above my head. & the sun coming through a pearly plum shade, so that the apples which still hang are pale pink red & green; the church tower silver & the spire pricks rising through the trees.

a Will this recall anything? I am so anxious to keep every scrap, you see.

I have been dabbling in K M's stories, & here to end revise my mind — in dryden? Still, if she were not so clever she could not be so disagreable.

A letter from Morgan this morning. It seems as critical of the East as of Bloomsbury, & sits down in a turban watching his Persian dance. Quite unimpressed. It is not improved by L. Viet. Luther. Flimsy he says, compared with Macaulay. which was perhaps what I meant.

There is a woman of genius among the cows. She has decided to leave the herd & eat the branches on the fallen tree. She has now one disciple. The rest utterly condemn. The is a Roger Fry. I heard from Roger the other day, all in a bubble bubble about Murry's fascinating pin-pricking article. He is so angry that he can talk of nothing else. (the cow has 2 disciples). We must so on doing what we like in the desert Roger says, & let Murry climb the heights, as he certainly will. The birds are moving about like nuts full of fish; they turn sideways vanish; sideways again, & become pale & black spots.

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Monday
19th
Sept

Miss Green has been for the weekend, & a most comfortable guest she does not fail. One need not be there about her; yet, at meal times, she proves quite a treat. Her father was a professor, or teacher, of Geology at Oxford. Her mother a Unitarian, & a liberal, with a great admiration for Gladstone. When Menna was 9 her father died. She has been Secretary to Lady St Davids.

"I consider you as my child" said Ly. St D: & understand her. Then to Beerbohm Tree for 3 weeks. He walked about the room, behaved like Shalvbio, & Dei Coeand to an invisible audience about life. Menna so and this trying, especially as it took place late at night in the dome of the Majestic. He used to say "Am I to put this autograph?" — Then she was with Heinemann. But his lack of courage annoyed her; he was afraid to publish Norman Angell; & not having a penny in the world, Menna was too proud & practical to stay — so she went on to the L.C.C. In this way she has lived all over England; & is fearfully independent — marches about, protected by her extreme plainness, unmolested, & unmolested: yet has a strong will of her own; & obstinacy, & won't be put upon. She is one of that regiment of the wage earning women's Republic. She eats up everything on her plate, very Sincerely; does not keep accounts; spends nothing on dress, & I daresay subscribes to the Russian famine Fund. Now she is off to spend a fortnight in Germany — a country which she thinks very beautiful. I said there were too many cigarette & plaster statues. She would have none yet. But then her thick legs, laced boots, wooden face, Hayden hair (vanity) & red cheeks, would be respectable there: ludicrous in Italy or France.

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Sept 28th

Elsie visit passed off successfully, & yet I am disappointed to find that I am no longer afraid of him—

This was the very last thing I wrote at Redmell—so I suppose. And today is the 2nd of November; Wednesday to be exact; 10 to 7. & Dorothea just left the house for five years & a half. But I like old Kate; who can't see, & gets thin picks up butter in mistake for bread; Dorothea surely is a survival from the glacial period. I felt her great nose jawing up & down; she has very powerful mandibles; & little pig eyes. Very soon we should have got across each other. I felt come over me the old aversion. The persists; proofs; brutally trampler; & speaks with a kind of measured severity, like such as people use in boarding houses to servants. Well we had no time to fight; & as they took 2 hours to come; & had to catch a train. She exclaimed to me. The said that the fruit of the Indian Nag might be another book. She said "My book had a very long review in the Times." Oh? I said. I never knew you'd written a book: It was a very stupid review" She began with increasing egotism, gnashing her teeth; & began eagerly to quote. Do our minutes pass.

But I ought to run over the 5 weeks or so left out; & really cannot; for I have seen so many people & roots; & so much has happened; though we are where we are. A printing machine is waiting at Richmond Station, & will be delivered at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

Ralph is putting his back to the wheel as a very solid obdurate back. Some of our luncheons have been stormy.

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or rather silent, with sudden rays of opposition from the third party. My belief is that he has to dig his feet in vigorously in order to make any impression against Lr: superior mobility.
But we have got along so far; & yielded, not reluctantly, about Tchehov's letters. In two days time — during the week end at any rate — I hope to finish Jacob. I have asked for books from the Times to compel myself to break off. And one of these days I must read it. We go to Rodmell on Friday.
I see I can think of nothing worth saying. It has been a November day: cold, dark, as wet as the tropics, with a great funeral (Wr Gardiners) passing the window.
Clive hopes to see more of me. He runs with Gandarilla; & Betty Behrens wishes me to review her book.

Tuesday 15th Nov

Really, really — this is disgraceful — 15 days of November spent — my diary none the wiser. But it may be said that the season when nothing is written one may safely suppose that I have been sketching books; or we have had tea at 4 — I have taken my walk afterwards; or I have had to read something for next days writing, or I have been out late, come home with stencilling material, & sat down in a statement to the fire. We went to Rodmell, & the gale blew at us all day; & at one a cyclic field, so we spent our time attending to the fire. The day before this I wrote the last word of Jacob — on Friday Nov. 4 to be precise, having begun it on April 16 1920: allowing for 6 months interval due to Monday or Tuesday & illness, this makes about a year. I have not yet looked at it. I am struggling with Henry James short stories for the Times;

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have I not just laid them down in a mood of satisfy? — then I must do Hardy; then I want to write a life of Newnes; then I shall have to furbish up Jacob; & one of these days, if only I could find energy to tackle the Paston letters I must start Reading: directly I've started Reading I shall think of another novel, I daresay. So that the only question appears to be — will my fingers stand so much scribbling?

We dined with Clive on Friday. Mdms. Mary. Maynard there. All the time I felt Mary solicitous, like an affectionate; & sure enough, as I left she took my hand, said

'I don't like this plan of quarrelling' & asked me to come — see her. So far nothing has happened — for was I to ring her up, or she me — & what's it all about?

Molly came to tea. Lilian came to lunch. Poor Lilian - poor Margaret - They sit beside the corpse of the Women's Guild; the blinds are drawn; they are sad & white, brave, fearless, but infinitely mournful. I see what has happened. When one leaves a life work at 60, one dies. Death, at least, must seem to be there, visible, expectant. One ought to work - never to take one's eyes from one's work; & then if death should interrupt, well, it is merely that one must get up & leave one's stitching — one went have wanted a thought on Kate. Margaret — says in her work one gets superannuated. One must give it up. A very cruel work then; & she is left without husband or child. So we dragged Lilian over Richmond; but the saw nothing but the ground. Very unhappy she said she was. And Janet wants to sell her odious house & move to the New Forest. I can't say that elderly group has met with the fate it deserves. Molly was dressed in Mrs Freshfield's velvets. & what is enough for an ordinary dress I daresay.

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"have we quarrelled with Desmond?" We asked. Dear dear us. We seem to have cranky & crusty? Oh nonsense. Oh well that's all right then — Desmond is merely lazy. He is very uncommunicative just now. He tells me nothing. You have heard about the Waterlows? Sydney has become quite intolerable. His plants red flowers & they come up blue. She can do nothing nothing right. He grambles all the week end. So at last she forbade him to come down — But he couldn't stand another Alice walking out of the house. They have been abroad for 6 weeks. She broke down & told me the whole thing. We must just go on drinking each other as other Couples do. she said.

Wed 16th Nov

Can I make out the Waterlows tragedy from this telegraphic scrap? Dare I scribble two quick to put in the quotation marks. Anyhow this was what Molly said the other day & as I have a collection of Sydneyana I add this.

Wigmore Hall to hear Bach: & nature has intervened; & I am, with my usual Economy, asking myself how I can get the utmost possible pleasure out of my evening, which I spend alone, since L. is dining with the Webbs, to meet Fabians. Shall I read King Lear? Do I want such a storm on the Emotions? I think I do. It is pouring; but we say Thank God it's warmer. It has been freezing for a week. We go to bed under red blankets, quilts, fur coats; & I can't get up till I hear the quarter struck. But now, as I say, it is raining.

I take in the Westminster Gazette. For some

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politics are beginning to interest me, as I suppose they interest City men - like a football match. One might become a virulent Socialist - or a Conservative? It is a game. I mean by that that I don't think I ends (nor does any one else) but I means. The American offer about the Navy has set me off on this. I get no letters nowadays, so I read my papers. Clive's poems have gone today to the Reviewers; our publishing day being December the 1st. Did I describe the advent of the Press? Nelly ~~H~~ panic struck, thinking it would come through the kitchen door. How do you invent these fears? I asked her. Indeed, if she were as conscious in her cooking we should do well. "Dont go & take the wire off the larder window, for fear men take" she said, "or we shall be having robbers."

But never have we been so peaceful domestically for so long.

What other news is there? I have left out everyone for a month - everything. How Lady Cromer came to tea in a charwoman's bonnet, & cut great chunks of bread for herself. My dear Virginia, when one is older one shall see how absurd it is to think that most of things - I knew my niece accuse me of it - ~~I~~ I never put it a thought: This was ~~after~~ when I told her how Kitty was worldly, & wished me to marry into South Kensington. She spoke with that old mellow worldly benignancy, as if ask her thoughts were gay & chatty & trivial, which I find in charming. In my house I like her better than in hers. She is trying to keep her down not a snob: "but he'll get among those kind of people" she said. The Basings were horrified when the rent here to ~~E~~ Winchester. "You send a boy to school in order to make friends" they said "The right sort"

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Friday
Nov.
25th

Li 41st birthday; & he has just caught a mouse in his hands. My apology for not writing is quite truthfully, the Hogarth Press. Roger woodcuts, 150 copies, have been pulped down in 2 days. I have just finished stitching the last copies – all but six. L. has been promoted & taken on in another capacity by the same post; & now, this afternoon, he has been sketching a plan to Green, who is stranded, by which he may become our Secretary. The Hogarth Press, you see, begins to outgrow its parents.

Last week end we spent at Tidmarsh. We must have talked over 12 hours, I suppose – & I remember so little: for with old, worn, relaxed, shabby, intimate friends, it runs so easily; no rapids, or waterfalls; room for everything; & no damned brilliance. We laughed over the letter of the mad nephew, I remember. And it was all very warm & the details – such as cups & plates – were exquisite. Carrington & Ralph have a passion for pewter beds. The geese shriek in the early morning. You see, I can't remember a thing – except that I was warm & communicative. Monday, I was sick. I had a headache. I thought how foolish I had been to ask Richmond for books: & now I have 4 articles to write, & my brain is uncovered, & I feel able to polish them all off, rather clap dash. But I wake in the night & think that I haven't written Hardy: & I shall then my paper & find him dead – So we go on.

Last night Jasper dined here. – behold, here is a post card, "Mr. & Mrs Pattison in 1831" which tells me a good deal. They were drowned. & Lord Houghton wrote a poem about 'em, & Jasper thought they were Presidents; & then came up

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talking about the river Wye, & Barbara, & Sweden & the Finns, & Sydney, & Westmead, & how no one will be read 100 years hence save Shaw, which Ralph said to me at tea today. Jan don't quite like. This is an unwonted subtlety in his part; though he is apt to be more subtle when he's severe. It was 27 yesterday.

Sat 26 Nov

Got quite done after leaving Leonard his Russian; & so I have an odd half hour to fill up, & reach for this book. I have been cross-examining Kot upon the quarrel between Dostoevsky & Turgenev, & find him stuffed with fact, & gloriously passionate & uncompromising. For once in a way I shall have some truth to put in my article. We have spent the day mostly indoors, labelling & Roger this afternoon. A yellow, prickly kind of day, with the fruit which comes of fog, & is accentuated, as it happens, by the road being up. It is said that we are to have wood pavement. Today we raised the servants' wages by £2 each; & Nelly, for a joke pretended that we had raised her & not Lottie, & I believe this has taken away Lottie's pleasure. I believe the reports that we perhaps meant, or the like, or preferred Nelly. At any rate, we have had no thanks.

As for Mary I am playing a fine diplomatic game. I have no time – 7.30 draws near – to detail the stages. But I aim at not seeing her; at being friendly; & never planning to meet; & never never never coming to grips. As of the [illegible] this, my nib here dropped into the hot & is clogged with black ink. I can't help suspecting that this is her game too. What could we say to each other alone?

Sat
Dec 3rd

The diplomatic game is being played with considerable finesse, I fancy. I shan't meet Mary face to face (which woman, I think from Crossing the Bar) at all. I shan't cross that bar. Oddly enough, I feel skeptical & disillusioned about Alice & his doings. I've said so often enough out of spite; but this seems normal & true. His lower old brain has run down; as at 40 it very well may, if you drink too many cocktails & sit too long under pretty Mrs Jowett. "Can it be Mr Jowett's fault, Madame?" said Grave to me the other night. But I can pass no judgment upon the prolixity of Mr Jowett.

I dined with the Sangers last night, & enjoyed society. I wore my new black dress, & looked, I daresay, rather nice. That's a feeling I very seldom have; & I rather intend to enjoy it oftener. I like clothes, if I can design them. So Bertie Russell was attentive, & we struck out like swimmers who knew their waters. One is old enough to cut the trimmings & get to the point. Bertie is a fervid egoist — which helps matters. And then, what a pleasure — his mind's uprising. I got as much out of him as I could carry.

"For I should soon be out of my depth" I said. I mean, I said, all this" & I waved my hand round the room, where by this time were assembled Mr & Mrs Amos, Rosalind Toynbee, a German, & Mrs Lucas — "all this is much; & you can put a telescope to your eye & see at through it."

If you had my brain you would find the world a very thin, colourless place" he said

But my colours are so foolish I replied.

You want them for your writing. he said. Do you never see things impersonally.

Yes. I call literature like that, Mallen, that is.

The Choruses in Samson are pure art. he said.

But I have a feeling that human affairs are impure.

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God does mathematics. That's my feeling. It is the most exalted form of art.

Art 2, I said.

Well there is style in mathematics as there is in writing, he said. I get the keenest aesthetic pleasure from reading well written mathematics. Lord Kelvin's style was abominable.

My brain is not what it was. I'm putting that & therefore, of course, I am now celebrated. In Japan they treated me like Charlie Chaplin — dis jesting. I shall write no more mathematics. Perhaps I shall write philosophy. The brain becomes rigid at 50 — & I shall be 50 in a month or two. I have to make money.

Surely money is settled upon Russells by the country, I said.

I gave mine away years ago, to help promising young men who wanted to write poetry. From 28 to 38 I lived in a chair & worked. Then my pennies got held gone. Now I have come to terms with myself: I am no longer surprised at what happens. I don't expect any more Emotional experiences. I don't think any longer that something is going to happen when I meet a new person.

I said that I disagreed with much of this. Yet perhaps I did not expect very much to happen from talking to Rorke. I felt that he had talked to so many people. Then I did not ask him to come here — I enjoyed it though a good deal; & got home & drank Cocoa in the kitchen; & at 7.30 this morning traced a smell of Shag in the house & found L. smoking his pipe by the kitchen fire, having come back safe.

There was no meeting at NewCastle; a very small one at Manchester; rather more at Durham; but it was an absurd effort for such results, & L. has broken to Mrs Green to that effect severely.

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Sunday
December
11th

Yes. I ought to be doing the beds; but Leonard insists upon doing them himself. Perhaps that's Lottie on the stairs? Ought I to go out & scold her for not staying in bed? Is the hot water on? Well, soon it will be time to go out & eat a plate of meat in the restaurant in the passage. In other words, both the servants have German measles, & for 3 days we have been servants instead of masters.

Excuse this scrawl therefore; — surely that is Lottie washing up?

Well, what news can I get in?
We went to Heartbreak house with the Ps. & Lytton. Lytton had just bought a manuscript of Lady Strachey Du Deffand. Lytton is ripe like a peach in the sun. Carrington wears his old overcoat cut down. Partridge laughs at the wrong jokes. There was John, Mrs John slightly grown elderly: Wins making his knees knock: & her face more substantial.

Not denied here. Why did I go to bed with the scoundrel after hearing him discourse of Sullivan Sambler & Sydney Worthington? They have grease in their system. And they despise women. And men & then not talks like a man of the underworld. No — I cannot make anything of this, what with one thing & another. I mark that for perhaps the 50th time, I am frustrated as I mean to write poor D. Hardy. I pray that he get rope enough by his fireside at this moment. Shag all bicycles, bronchitises, & influenzas keep far from him!

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Sunday
Dec
15/15

Here it's practically the end of the year, & more pages left blank at the than seems to me altogether wholesome. But my diary dwindles, perversely enough, when the stuff for it is most abundant. There was Roger here for tea & dinner yesterday; the day before I had to go plundering the shops for presents after tea (we have tea at 4 now to suit Ralph) The day before, Thursday, I had to put in semi-colons to my Henry James article while talking to Ralph over my shoulder & then to rush to catch a train to Hampstead to dine with Brett & Gertler. To-morrow we dine with Adrian. But in these accumulating facts I am thinking my business is describing them. Well, Butts Galen need give no cause for jealousy. I thought to myself, as I sat in my black dress by the anthracite stove in the studio that of Sydney, Kot, Gertler, Brett, Miln, & Sullivan were to enter, I should obey the rounder. It is a group without teeth or claws. For one thing they have no faith in each other. In my day groups were formidable because they coalesced. But there was Gertler dismissing Sydney as an old bore (not to his face) & Kot: detecting faults, "yes very serious faults - he will misunderstand my character - I do not find fault with the people I really like - I never discuss them - & Miln is a moon-faced cipher - what they call, Sunday, a quiet man - & Sullivan is too much of the undertaker, facad, mobile lipped, unshaven, unlombed, black, uncompromising, unpitying, powerful man of Angkor, genius in Hampstead type for my taste. The bores were rather their & Gertler was the chief stimulant. He has grown fat; his hair stand upright; he has the same tightly buttoned face as ever - little eyes - hard cheeks - something

female concentrated about him which makes me repeat, however foolishly, that I don't believe he can paint a picture – though his perseverance would bore holes in granite. – if that helped. However to balance this, I must add that he's more spontaneous than most: has an alert mind, a is ~~not~~. I should say, in defiance of Ralph, something of a Puritan. Sydney shocks him. Sydney says "Now what do you do about women generally? Do you copulate with your models?" – and again, "Did you think that Marg made a bloody fool of herself the other night?"

Brett is cold, docile & small. He danced before Q. Victoria.

Roger's visit went off specially well. We are grown rather intimate, & sit talking at our ease – practically of everything. This was not so a year ago. How plainly the good effect of having friends in common – not, as used to be the way, my seeing Roger alone, while Leonard stayed at home. I see in this one of the good effects of middle age. Roger had Bleak in his pocket & read a passage about which wanted us to do Leonard made him stand to his guns; & then on to talk the usual things. Roger ~~is~~ judges every minute how that he doesn't paint. So we reflected upon these strange, entire whole men of genius, dispensations, by which Roger always was masterpieces ahead of him – I see great novels – We have our atmosphere of illusion, without which life would be so much duller than it is. Here am I at last starting on Hardy, & saying to myself, not for the first time, This at least is going to be first rate. We discussed Proust. & Clive

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& Jane. I like to trace these things, I was interested to see how far apart Roger & Chris are now compared with what they were — Roger respects to Chris friendliness: had not yet been to see him.

And before this Rosalind & Arnold T. appeared with a fillip & the manuscript of her new novel. She is a wisp of a woman, with the eyes of a kind sensitive thoughtful nature, which can't, I am afraid, succeed much in the way of art. She can't by any possibility write a long book, she said: & the only made £10 by her last; & altogether she seems rather shiftless & defenceless, though she is Gilbert Murray's daughter. I'm glad at least I'm not that: worth a dash of aristocracy to refine still further.

Our ~~Lirtumort~~ luck seems, at last, to be in again. At least there are all good signs. Allison is tired of farming: the Americans want to have L's Contemporary articles: 37 copies of Tchekov were ordered yesterday, & the Labour Monthly wants L. to write another article. If each of these letters had been written the other way round we should have been very dismal, so we ought to be very cheerful. With luck we may have £400 instead of £250: & we might buy a motor car: & we might buy the meadow: & we might run up another lodge, & we might take in a new strip of garden. & so on — so on.

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Mon
Dec.
19th

I will add a postscript, as I wait for my parcels to be wrapped up, on the nature of criticism.

"Mrs Woolf?, I want to ask you one or two questions about your Henry James article —

First (only about the right name for one of the stories:) And now you use the word 'lewd'. Of course, I don't wish to see you to change it, but surely that is rather a strong expression to apply to anything by Henry James — I don't have it read the story lately & I own — but still my impression is —

Well, I thought that when I read it: one has to go by one's impressions at the time.

But you know the usual meaning of the word?.

It is — ah — Deity — Now the poor dear old Henry James — At any rate, think it over, & ring me up in 20 minutes.

So I thought it over & came to the required conclusion in twelve minutes & a half.

But what is one to do about it? It needs it sufficiently clear not only that her word didn't stand 'lewd', but that her didn't much like anything else. I feel that this becomes more often the case, & I wonder whether to break off, with an explanation, or to pander, or to go on writing against the current. This last is probably right, but if somehow when the curious mess of doing that cramps one. One writes stiffly, without spontaneity. Confused, for the present I think let it be, & meet my castigation with resignation. People will complain I'm sure, & poor Bruce fondling his paper

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like an only child dreads public criticism, & ~~anticipates it, not~~
~~wholly~~ is them with me, not so much for disrespect to poor old
Henry, but for bringing blame on the supplement.
And how much time I have wasted!
We dined with Adrian & there was Hope: & we sat in
the high draughty cold room with all the empty
spaces, shouting at each other - till I felt the
light in my eyes, in my brain - ach ayme deposed &
desolate. These deaf women make society
impossible. It is like shouting in a high wind on the
Brighton parade.
We had been buying presents, & sitting in the Club
wedged between Kot & Bob. Kot persisting, ~~in his~~
entreating, emphasizing, analyzing, rubbing in - how
we are to publish Russian books - how L. is
to save up the Contemporary - no, you misunderstand me -
I did not say I consider your ~~way~~ life to be worthless -
Bob on the other side unusually calm & even sensitive.
He is having his arteries manipulated in order to
~~take up~~ finish his play. He groaned sadly that he
could not write. Desmond tells him that he is not
dramatic. What with the Aeschen & Desmond he
has come to a full stop: & said that he felt an
old forger, & he said this simply & I felt sorry for him:
Still, he seems to believe in his arteries, & one they
Hart Stevens, he will take us all by surprise -
Nor do I, at least, insist upon more plays.
To add to Leonard's trophies, the Wells have asked him
to edit a book: the League of Nations Union offer to
reprint Ind. Government: & the Village in the Jungle is
sold among other rare first editions at £1 -
Life very good.